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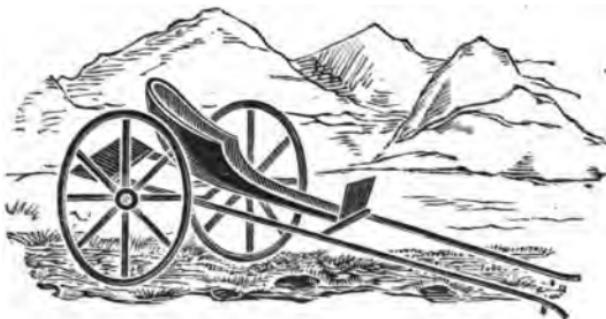
OVER THE DOVREFJELDS,

BY

J. S. SHEPARD,

AUTHOR OF "A RAMBLE THROUGH NORWAY," &c.

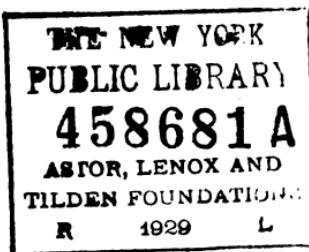
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P R E F A C E .

The following notes pretend to no higher aim than an attempt to familiarise the English public with the comparative ease and comfort with which a visit to Norway may nowadays be accomplished.

There is no doubt that exaggerated ideas of the difficulty and expense attendant upon such a trip deter many who would otherwise indulge in a Scandinavian tour, and it is in the hope of making the way easier that we have ventured to pen a rough sketch of our run over the Dovrefjelds, for the benefit of those who, with a month to spare and a twenty-pound note in their pockets, are sighing for "pastures new and strange" in their approaching summer ramble.

Our thanks are due to the proprietors of the *Illustrated London News* for the loan of the engravings of the obelisk and statue to Harald Harfager, and to C. Hughes, Esq., for his translation of the Ballad "Sinklarsvisen" in the Appendix.

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OVER THE DOVREFIELDS.

CHAPTER I.

Routes to Norway.—*Voyage out.*—Christiansand.—Approach to Christiana.—Norwegian Coinage.—Maps and Guide Books.—Oscar's Halle.—Tideman's Bondeliv.—The Beds of the Country.—Topography of Norway.

Of late years the choice of routes by which Norway can be reached has greatly increased. Formerly, Hull used to be well nigh the only port from which steamers ran, and those any thing but regularly, and it is still by far the most convenient starting point for a Scandinavian tour. Nevertheless, London, Newcastle, and latterly Granton, near Edinburgh, take off a fair share of those, who disdaining the overland route, via Ostend, Hamburg, and Copenhagen, brave the terrors (not altogether imaginary) of the North Sea.

On our two previous visits, we had made Hull our point of departure, and now, for the sake of a little variety, we felt somewhat inclined to try the London route, although the passage takes a day

longer than from Hull, and the steamers that run (although belonging to the same Company, Messrs. Wilson & Son of Hull,) are not to be compared for size or equipment with those on the former station.

When, however, we read that the steamship *Oder*, Captain Gatkins, Commander, would sail from Millwall Dock, on Friday, June 28th, we at once made up our minds. A good Captain is not the least important ingredient in one's comfort, and well being on a sea voyage, and the name of Gatkins, brought up instanter to our minds, a vision of as genial and true hearted a Yorkshireman, as ever hailed from Hull since the days of Robinson Crusoe.

As the *Oder* was to sail early on the Friday, and Millwall is a spot by no means easy or pleasant of access in the small hours of the morning, we transferred ourselves and effects on board the evening before, and found most of the passengers had done the same. Our slumbers were rather interrupted by the operation of taking in cargo, with an accompaniment of shouting, stamping, and swearing, which lasted far into the morning, so far indeed that we nearly missed the tide, and had eventually to be ignominiously tugged out of dock, into the river, by a bit of a steamer, which would have made a good study of dignity and impudence as it puffed away beside us.

Our first day passed pleasantly enough, but towards midnight we had a stiffish nor'-wester, which sadly interfered with our peace of mind. From previous and painful experience, we knew the *Oder* to be a most desperate and persistent pitcher, and she now showed us she had not forgotten her old tricks. True there was some excuse for her, as the wind caught her amidships, but at it she went, rolling from side to side, with a sweep that at times almost dipped her boats into the water. She kept up this slightly discomforting performance, all Saturday, and well into the Sunday morning, by which time, the Norwegian Coast was in sight, its black and inhospitable looking rocks greatly belying the hearty welcome ever to be met with on its shores.

The pleasant cry "*Land*," soon brought up such of our passengers as were still groaning below, and if it be a fact as Dante has it, that "there is no greater sorrow than in our days of misery to think on past joys," it is no less true that the victims of sea sickness, when once again in smooth water, retain, happily, but slight memories of their recent sufferings.

The sea was now dotted with fishing Jægts (*Anglice*, Yachts), and we passed at intervals a barren island or two, on which at certain seasons of the year, seals are said to abound. Let not, however, enthusiastic sportsmen conjure up at this visions

of tremendous and easily filled bags ; the “*critters*” in these frequented districts are wary to a degree, and many a long and weary hour of watching is necessary to get even a shot at them, as one of our travelling companions subsequently found. He had made up his mind at all costs to have a seal, and spent the greater part of a month in the neighbourhood of Christiansand. It was all, however, to no purpose, and with time, money, and patience alike exhausted, we picked him up again on our return, a sadder and wiser man, and, like Hector McIntyre, without his “*phoca*.”

Immediately on passing within the shelter of the land we made a sharp turn to the left, in order to enter the bay at the end of which Christiansand lies. The appearance of the town from the harbour is anything but striking, for save and except one church tower it has no public building to relieve the monotony of the dense mass of low wooden houses of which it is composed. The hills overlooking it, and hemming it in, have a great sameness of color and outline, and when we landed for an hour’s run, during the steamer’s stay, we found that a closer acquaintance did but strengthen the impression formed at a distance.

As it was Sunday evening, the streets were crowded with sober-clad prosperous looking citizens, accompanied by their wives and olive branches, a few extending their stroll into the country beyond.

Finding that the fashionable promenade was to a bridge some few hundred yards distant, we made our way thither, paying, as we passed, a flying visit to the single church Christiansand possesses. The services (Guds-Tjeneste) in Norway, as in our country districts in England, are only held in the mornings and afternoons, and the building was therefore closed.

Walking round it (not however to admire its architectural beauties, for they are *nil*) we met a gentleman with a sort of official clerical look, that encouraged us with our best bow and in our most mellifluous Norsk to ask his assistance in gaining admittance. His answer, to our surprise, came in French, and it was ludicrous enough, after continuing our enquiries for some time in that language, to ultimately discover that we were talking to a compatriot of our own, a fact we were made aware of by his replying proudly to a query as to his nationality, "*Non Monsieur, Je suis Anglais.*"

We eventually got inside the Church, which was a dreary white-washed barn, the one prominent and hideous object of attraction being the king's pew, an awful erection, resplendent with gold and color, and surmounted by a huge canopy. It suggested an irresistible and most irreverent comparison between it and a royal opera box, commanding, like the latter, a good view of the (pulpit) performance.

Leaving here, we made our way towards the river crossing it by a wooden drawbridge, which gave admission to vessels of considerable tonnage.

It was by no means a substantial erection, and to protect it from too great a pressure there was a notice to Jehus to drive only at a foot pace over the central portion.

There were some rocks to the right of the road beyond, which seemed high enough to promise a good view of the surrounding country ; so, like Syntax in search of the picturesque, we scrambled up, and found ourselves more than repaid.

The town, which from the harbour had looked so flat and wanting in variety, presented a very different picture when viewed from above. On three sides rose ranges of green hills ; far away in front stretched the blue waters of the fiord, while the town itself, so commonplace in detail, under the magic influence of a most brilliant sunset looked positively Turneresque in the glow of color it presented. The *coup d'œil* landwards was different in character, but yet very charming. On our right extended a wide sweep of highly cultivated open country (a rare phenomenon in Norway), dotted thickly with detached farm houses, the black spire of a wooden Church rising up in their midst ; whilst on the extreme horizon the landscape was bounded by range upon range of pine clad mountains.

The opposite side of the picture was filled up by the intricate windings of a lovely valley, which, partly veiled in shadow, stretched as far as the eye could follow. In its recesses the river at our feet had its birth, forming on its way to the sea a number of falls, one of which is said to be well worth a visit.

The rocks forming our eyrie were covered with a variety of wild flowers, and fruit of the tiny Alpine strawberry was already beginning to shew itself, although, to our regret, as yet green and uneatable.

On our return to the steamer we passed what looked like a Dissenting Meeting-house, from which the congregation was streaming forth in a crowd. One of the deacons or elders (or whatever their title may be here) spoke a little English, and informed us that he and his friends had seceded from the Church congregation of the town, as they disagreed with the doctrines taught by the presiding minister.

Judging from the fact that Christiansand for its eleven or twelve thousand inhabitants possesses but a single Church, one might not uncharitably infer that zeal for religion did not flourish there to a remarkable extent, and it seemed as though the advent of a new sect or two might serve to rouse up their flagging energies. We therefore left our friend, at whose denunciations in broken English we were not a little amused, with the parting wish (as sincere as such wishes generally are) that the gospel light

he had kindled might not be extinguished by an adverse fate.

Our course for the remainder of the voyage lay up Christiana Fiord, land-locked on every side except the south, so that unless the wind blows from that quarter the water is as placid as on an inland sea. The Swedish coast was, however, not yet visible, being more than sixty miles away, but the fiord rapidly narrowed as we approached the north, and within a short distance of Christiana was barely two miles across.

We lingered on deck till close upon midnight. The sun had indeed gone down, shortly however to reappear ; but he had left behind along the whole sweep of the horizon a sky resplendent with the most vivid orange and gold it was ever our fortune to gaze on.

When we came on deck next morning the steamer was entering the Narrows, and the channel abruptly sank to a mile or two in width. Round about Drobak, which occupies an important strategic position commanding the passage, are a series of forts, which give it an appearance of great strength, at least to unprofessional eyes, though, doubtless, in these days, when the theory of military defences is as shifting and changing as a kaleidoscope, it may be far behind in all the latest improvements.

Seeing Christiana again was like meeting with an old friend that seemed to have put on his best

looks to do us honour. The approach and view of it from the sea is striking at any time, but favoured as we now were by a cloudless sky and brilliant sunshine, the effect as we entered the harbour from behind the cluster of small islands that shut it in, was extremely fine. It is true the city itself contributes but little to the *tout ensemble*, which derives its principal charm from its situation and local colouring. The ground it stands on slopes gradually down to the fiord's edge, and the long lines of wooden warehouses, black with age, which line the quays, seem from the absence of beach or foreshore, to have their foundations in the water itself. The hills surrounding the town are only from 500 to 1000 feet in height, but they are well wooded, picturesque in outline, and command some lovely views, notably from Frogner Sæter, about an hour's drive away.

The shores of the Fiord, especially to the left of the city, are broken up into a number of small bays or inlets, giving the projecting tongues of land the appearance of so many small islands ; they are clothed with a dense foliage, and at every available point is perched a villa or country house, surrounded by its patch of garden and cultivated ground, standing out like oases in the midst of a desert of dark green pines.

Prominent among them all is Oscar's Halle, the summer palace of the Crown Prince of Norway

and Sweden, a pretty castellated but somewhat toy like building of white stone, which we paid a flying visit to later on in the day.

All this had passed before our eyes in less time than it takes to tell it, and we were now alongside the quay, which was thickly thronged with a large crowd expectant of our arrival. Most of the Norwegians on board had friends to welcome them, and it was interesting to watch the affectionate greetings exchanged.

We were not so fortunate, and after undergoing a very slight examination at the hands of the custom house officials, we shouldered our knapsacks and went our way, congratulating ourselves on the discomforts and delays escaped through our freedom from what the ancient Romans most aptly called "*impedimenta*," alias baggage.

Christiana has several hotels of which the "Scandinavian" and "Victoria" are the two principal. The last named is remarkably good ; while of the former, we have heard many complaints of the incivility and want of attention shown.

In our own case we put up at one of the smaller hostgeries, the "Britannia," in the Toldbodgade (Custom House Street). The landlord was an old acquaintance of ours, and his house is a fairly comfortable one, and most conveniently situated for the quays and railway station.

We had determined to make but a few hours stay

in Christiana, and to start next morning on the overland route to Trondhjem, the ancient capital of Norway, which lies some 350 miles to the north-east, and our available time was first of all devoted to making the necessary preparations before plunging into the interior, such as laying in a stock of money of the country, maps, guide books, &c.

For the first we betook ourselves to the exchange office (vexel contoir) of Dybwad & Co., in Carl Johan's Gade, and found them very civil and obliging, and what was more to the point in gentry of their profession, conscientious.

The Norwegian coinage is by no means a comprehensive one, being confined to dollars, marks, and skillings ; the respective values, to use the formula of our youthful days, being 24 skillings make one mark, and five marks one dollar, the last of which represents as nearly as possible 4s. 6d. of our money, the mark being worth about 10*½*d., and the skilling a fraction short of an half-penny. The usual rate of exchange is four dollars 56 skillings (more or less) to the sovereign, and Bank of England notes always command a higher rate than gold.

The Norwegian currency has not yet arrived at the dignity of a gold coinage* but as a make weight they have notes descending as low in value as one

* A bill has been this year brought before the Norwegian Storthing to facilitate the establishment of a gold currency, which shall pass equally in the three Scandinavian kingdoms.

dollar, which are very much less cumbersome than a mass of silver, and pass readily in all parts of the country, the farmers (*Bönder*) preferring them to specie.

It is also requisite to lay in a good stock of *smaa penge*—literally small money—pieces of one, two, three, four, and eight skillings, which are struck in white metal, and while doing so, to take care that they are all of the latest issue, as much of the coin in circulation is only taken at a discount. Twenty years ago the Norwegian Coinage could almost vie with the German for badness, more especially in the smaller fry, and it was difficult to decide, as one gazed mournfully on the vile greasy trash received in exchange for one's bright sovereigns, whether Teuton or Scandinavian bore away the palm in worthlessness.

Guide Books, to some extent, are a necessity in such a country as Norway, but the choice happily is limited. The “Knapsack Guide” of Murray is useful in its descriptions of towns and beaten tracks, and the opening chapters on the history, government, and products of the country are full of accurate and interesting information; but as a “Knapsack Guide” the book is an entire misnomer, for, save in the title, it hardly once alludes to the mode of progression there hinted at. Many of the details given of the various routes, and remarks on the *stations* (inns) thereon, are altogether erroneous,

as changes are constantly occurring; and Murray has issued but two editions in the last twenty years.

The best book for the purpose is the *Lomme Reise Route* or, Pocket Way book, which is published every Spring in Christiana, and contains an itinerary of every road, distance of stages, charges for posting, and hints as to the accommodation to be found on the way. It costs buts 16 skilings, and for those who are innocent of Norwegian, Mr. Bennett, an Englishman, who has lived some twenty years in Christiana, publishes every year a translation, enlarged by many useful notes and contributions from tourists of their feats on fell and fiord.

A monthly paper is also published called the *Norges Kommunikationsblad*, containing a complete list and time table of the few railways and the innumerable steamers on the various lakes and fiords, and which should on no account be omitted from the tourist's list of preparations.

Mr. Bennett, who exercises a species of mild despotism over the army of English that annually invades Norway, has in addition published a little book of dialogues, in which he has striven with some success, to make the way easy for the learner, by affixing the pronunciation in phonetic language.

It may be, that it is impossible for the pupil to acquire in this way the finer shades of accent and

intonation, but it is near enough for all practicable purposes, and is far preferable to the vague and erratic sounds generally indulged in by beginners.

In the matter of maps, there are but two reliable ones, Munch's and Waligorski's, the former expensive and not so clear as could be wished ; Waligorski's, which costs about two dollars, is fairly to be depended upon, and besides being clearer, is equal in nearly every other respect to Munch's.

Of course if the traveller merely intends keeping to the main roads there is no necessity for either, as the outline map given in Bennett's handbook will be amply sufficient for all his needs.

All these little preliminaries being settled to our satisfaction, we employed part of the time at our disposal before dinner in taking a header in the fiord.

We found a bathing establishment under the shadow of the Agerhuus fortress, which, as far as purposes of defence go, is all but useless. A few bronze cannon captured from the Swedes in some of their numerous wars in the 17th or 18th centuries, and guarded by a solemn looking sentry, were the only signs of warlike preparation. In all else, the grass grown moat, and the groves of trees which covered the castle well nigh from donjon unto keep, showed that happily for this northern land "grim visaged war had smoothed his wrinkled front," and wreathed it with a chaplet of leaves.

Our dip was delightfully exhilarating. There were no sands, and the water went sheer down for twenty or thirty feet close to the shore, so that one must be a swimmer to indulge with safety, although cork jackets are kept ready for those who care to trust themselves within their embrace.

We walked from here along the Drammen road, through an almost unbroken line of villas, the same we had seen from the fiord, down to the edge of which their gardens run. From a small pier we caught one of the tiny steamers which are constantly plying across the harbour, and for three skillings we were ferried across the arm that separated us from the peninsular on which Oscar's Halle is situated.

We had a charming rustic walk to it, the road winding through the recesses of a most picturesque country. Here and there were kiosks, from which on Sundays and Holiday times excellent music is discoursed to the good people of Christiana, who come over in crowds to disport themselves in these sylvan shades.

We joined a group who were just going over the castle, among them a fat Norman from the Pays de Caux, who, on finding we could speak French, speedily fraternised with us.

A thousand years ago his Norwegian ancestors were probably preparing for the little predatory excursion which ended in their making a perma-

nent sojourn, by annexing with almost more than Prussian rapacity (were that possible), one of the best provinces of France. It was somewhat of a coincidence, that the very town from which Monsieur hailed (Fecamp) was precisely the one, if we are to believe the old chroniclers, at which Rollo and his Northmen, in the year of grace 895, made their first appearance in the land they were afterwards to give their name to.

On crossing the threshold, we were politely requested to equip ourselves in a pair of felt slippers, in order to avoid damaging the floors of the salons, which were of polished wood, and dazzling in their brilliancy. The slippers were emphatically an easy fit, so easy in fact, that they were continually dropping off, and to keep them on at all the majority of the party assumed a shuffling sort of crawl, which was anything but graceful.

For ourselves we were in some sort prepared, for at a previous visit, two years before, an inventive genius who was with us discovered that a skating motion was the most practicable method of progression, so profitting by past experience we glided along in style, the getting up stairs being the one difficulty we were not able to surmount, without more than once leaving our "skates" behind us.

The palace is quite on a miniature scale, being only intended for the prince whenever he honors

Christania with a visit—an event of remarkably rare occurrence. Perhaps now that he has exchanged his princely coronet for a kingly crown, he may favour his loyal subjects with a little more of his company, for he is extremely popular in Norway, and always receives a most enthusiastic greeting.

The rooms, although small, are tastefully furnished and arranged, and the walls hung with some of the best products of the Norwegian pencil. The salons on the ground floor contain a series of striking views of the coast and inland scenery, the fiords bearing away the palm for grand impressive beauty.

But from the standpoint of art and national interest, the ten pictures by Tidemand are the *chefs d'œuvre* of the collection, who is well and favorably known to Englishmen by his contributions to many of our recent exhibitions.

In this instance he has illustrated Norwegian *Bonde liv*, or farmer life, in what may be called a pictorial "seven ages," following on canvass the unchequered career of a peasant, from the cradle to the grave. They are characterised by an almost severe treatment, both in coloring and details, which, however, well accords with the simple patriarchal scenes depicted on them.

The first age is that of childhood. A young mother, with a babe in her arms, sits in the living room of the farm, reading to two little damsels,

both of whom listen attentively, the elder of them busily knitting the while.

The second age shows us a brother and sister, on the mountain side, watching the flock of sheep that graze around, the boy waking the echoes with a shepherd's pipe. We next see the same boy being taught by his father to make fishing nets, which many Norwegian farmers understand the use of far better than their ploughs. And then comes the parting from home, when, staff in hand and wallet on his back, he is taking a tearful leave of father, mother, and friends.

A scene of homely love-making follows. The prodigal has returned, drawn, perhaps by some sweet influence, and the happy pair are in the dairy, the lady's task being evidently to watch the milk boiling in a huge cauldron, and which, judging from the distracting attentions of the gallant, seems in some danger of being scalded.

The knot has been tied in the next, and we see the delighted mother holding out a lively babe to seize the pipe which the father stretches towards it. This picture is entitled "Family Joys," and as a companion we have one appropriately named "Family Sorrows," which shows us the same child "sick and near unto death," while the parents are watching over its bed with faces in which anguish and resignation are struggling for the mastery.

Finally, we see the pair advanced in years,

childless and alone in their hut, yet drawing consolation in their solitude, and preparing for their journey to the eternal shores by the perusal of that Book which contains the panacea for all our ills.

Besides these, which follow as it were in a natural sequence, are two others: a party of peasants spearing salmon by torchlight, a bold spirited production, and a marriage procession, the gem of the gallery.

In it we see the bridal pair in gay fantastic attire, such as is always worn on these occasions; the bride resplendent in breast plate, and crown flashing with gold and jewels. They are on their way from church to the house where the festivities are to be held, and a band of musicians, with shepherd's pipes and violins, are outside to greet them.

Prominent in the hands of the master of the feast, who stands on the door-step, is a "loving-cup" of portentous dimensions, which will, 'ere the night be gone, be emptied again and again to the health and happiness of the newly wedded pair.

A climb to the roof of the palace should not be omitted, as the view from the battlements is lovely in the extreme, commanding an uninterrupted sweep of the city and harbour, and allowing the eye to follow for miles the picturesque windings of the far stretching fiord.

This being the season when the Osterdal farmers flock in crowds to the seaports in order to meet the

merchants and make their annual contracts for the timber which they may fell during the winter, most of the rooms in our hotel were taken up before our arrival, and we, together with two, our late fellow passengers, were put into a salon on the ground floor, which was turned for the nonce into a sleeping room by the introduction of four beds for our use.

The Norwegian beds, it may be premised, are the one great drawback in the comfort of Scandinavian travel. To a philosophical mind this may be a minor inconvenience, but they undoubtedly claim to rank at the head of the list, as the one item against which an Englishman can (and with justice) vent his national weakness for grumbling.

The first count in the indictment is, that unless a man happens to be a dwarf he will find them about a foot too short, so that to lie in them at all he must be doubled up something like a boa constrictor at the "Zoo" after a heavy meal.

It is true one might put one's self into a straight position by poking outside those portions of one's extremities that cannot be accommodated within, but this is most carefully prevented by the beds being constructed in boxes, the sides of which rise some distance above the mattress, and effectually debar the sleeper from the luxury of stretching out his legs, unless he imitates the Yankee fashion, and puts them at an acute angle upon some convenient ledge arranged beforehand for the purpose.

So much for one end, nor shall we find the other much better cared for. The pillow is far from resembling that delicious compound of feathers and fine linen, on which the weary head of the tired wayfarer sinks to repose in our own land. The Norwegian *hoved-pude* (head-cushion) is of the smallest, and contains but the barest possible allowance of feathers. Underneath, it has a huge substratum of bolster, triangular in shape, which slopes at an acute angle and is sufficiently large to receive the head and shoulders of the sleeper; so that the upper part of the body is in a half sitting half lying posture, while the lower is in the snake-like condition above alluded to.

Our grumbling does not end here, for the bed-clothes must also come in for a share of our animadversions. They are of the scantiest, sufficing simply to cover the bed's surface, without allowing any margin for that process of "tucking up," so dear to juveniles; on the top of all is placed what should be an eider down quilt, but is generally of a much heavier material, pleasant enough in the winter, but insufferably hot during the summer nights, in which our experience of them occurred.

The little drawbacks here enumerated are not indeed quite incurable, for anyone who possesses the gift of "bed making" can simply take everything to pieces, and re-arrange it according to his English tastes and likings, and we have met with more than

one tourist who invariably went through this performance before getting between the sheets.

In other respects the rest of the appointments of the room were almost the same as in other civilised lands. Carpets indeed there were none, nor are they seen save in the houses of the "upper ten," the floors in default being painted a pale brown.

There are indeed two articles of furniture which strike English eyes as somewhat peculiar, viz.: stoves and spittoons. The former are huge iron erections rising nearly to the ceiling, often artistic in design, and bearing in many instances the date of the last century upon them.

The spittoons are filled with the tops of fir and juniper trees, in lieu of sawdust, and with native lodgers are most indispensable to every room, although, like the Yankees, they seem to have a roving propensity in connection with this little weakness, which renders it somewhat difficult to tie them down to a fixed mark.

Our dinner despatched, at which we were glad to renew acquaintance with some old friends in the shape of a dish of Alpine strawberries and cream (*jordbær og fløte*), we took an evening stroll through the city to enjoy the refreshing sea breeze that had begun to blow.

Christiana is by no means a picturesque town, the streets being all built at right angles, a fact due to its only having been in existence some two

centuries, being founded and named by Christian IV. in 1624. The public buildings are few in number, and noteworthy for nothing but the incapability of the architect who designed them.

The *Storthing* or Parliament House, and the University, which contains within its walls the Zoological Museum and the Library of 200,000 volumes, are both in Carl Johan's Gade, which runs the whole length of the city, from the harbour to the hill on which the palace stands. The gardens surrounding the latter are laid out as a public promenade, and *alfresco* concerts, on the model of those in the Champs Elysées, are held in the evening by an enterprising speculator, the *entrée* being free, and the proprietor depending on the refreshment bar to reimburse him for his venture.

The suburbs extend for a long distance, many of the villas being of very original design, quite refreshing to behold after the stale classical adaptations and abortions of carpenter's Gothic, which are made to do duty with us.

On our two previous visits we had made Bergen on the west coast our starting point, and had (varying the route each time) crossed the country to Christiania. This time we were rather more aspiring in our ideas, as we contemplated working our way north as far as Trondhjem, the ancient capital, a distance of some 350 miles, 140 of which

would be by rail and steamer, as it is the principal high road in Norway, and has on it a comparatively large traffic.

It may seem a strange choice, that of so frequented and travelled a track for a pleasure trip. At home it is true one would not exactly select the road from London to Manchester, but in Norway the case is very different.

North of Trondhjem, in the narrow strip of the country that runs for nearly 800 miles up to the North Cape, there is, save in the immediate vicinity of the towns and the mail route that runs from Levanger to Sweden, not a practicable road to be found—the whole traffic is by water. In the southern district, in that part which on the map looks like the head of a gigantic tadpole (the narrow strip aforesaid being the tail), the main roads across it from coast to coast may be counted on the fingers.

There are, first, the two roads from Bergen to Christiania, the one over the Fillefjeld, the other through the Hallingdal; secondly, that along the coast from Bergen to Molde, and thence to Trondhjem; thirdly, the road from the last named place to Christiania through Röraas, and by the banks of the Glommen; and finally the one we ourselves were about to take, through the Gulbrandsdal and over the Dovrefjeld mountains to Trondhjem, together with the branch road that midway strikes

off from it through the picturesque Romsdal to Molde and Christiansund.

In all, some half dozen which can fairly be looked upon as main roads or arteries, the rest, and those principally in the extreme south and round about the capital, being either feeders to the main roads, or local by-ways for the accommodation of the towns that so thickly stud the sea-board of the Christiania fiord, with some few others in the neighbourhood of Stavanger.

Thus an immense district of Norway is literally roadless—it might almost be said pathless, and this not from any remissness or want of energy on the part of her people, but because, from the nature of the country, it is a matter of simple impossibility to construct them.

In justice to the government it must be said that wherever it has been possible a road has been made, and no country in the world can show finer specimens of engineering than are to be found on many of the Norwegian main routes.

It is the peculiar configuration of Norway that is the great bar to their existing in any number. If we could mount high enough to obtain a bird's-eye view of the whole country, it would present to us the appearance of an immense cake of rock, barren, dreary, and uninhabited for nineteen twentieth's of its whole extent.

A few dents or fissures, sparsely furrowed on the

face of this rocky desert, would mark the position of the scattered valleys, and it is in these alone, as the only cultivated districts, that roads can be made, and maintained when made, with success.

Out of these valleys the country is a “villainous compound” of bog and mountain, which, save on the *sæter* pastures during the short summer, affords support neither to man nor beast.

Thus the traveller in Norway must, “*nolens volens*,” adhere closely to the king’s highway. He may take a run up to the *sæters* (chalets) that are perched on the mountain summits, or, if he be an Alpine clubman, condescend to scale some of the peaks that overhang the valley; but as far as down-right progress goes, if he wants to get from one end of the country to the other he will find no such things as cross roads, no shady country lanes, or pleasant paths through fields, as with us; the high road is before him, and that he must follow with the consciousness that there is perhaps not another within a hundred miles.

CHAPTER II.

Rail to Eidsvold.—On the Miösen.—Ruins of Hamar.—Norwegian psalmody.—Lillehammer.—The Mesna Fos.—A Norwegian supper table.

THE first part of our journey was by rail to Eidsvold, a village lying at the southern end of the Miösen lake, about forty-five miles from Christiania.

The starting time was 7.50 a.m., and on arriving at the station we found all its passages and approaches literally crammed with intending passengers. As there are but two trains a day there is always a large traffic, but this morning the Exodus of the Osterdal farmers back to their valleys, produced an extra pressure, and one that the officials were by no means prepared for.

The waiting rooms are on the plan of the French "*salles d'attente*," the passengers being shut up in pens according to their respective classes, and let out on the platform when the train is ready.

The first rush speedily filled up all the available space, and carriage after carriage was added on before the dense crowd was finally disposed of.

While thus waiting we were favored by the unwelcome attentions of a muddled votary of

Bacchus, who was most anxious to make our acquaintance, following us persistently wherever we went, and plying us with questions as to our nationality and destination. We bore it very patiently for some time, and eventually got rid of him by making a rush into a freshly arrived carriage, into which our tormentor would have followed but for the fact of his ticket only entitling him (fortunately for us) to a third class seat.

The country between Christiania and Eidsvold is not unlike the wilder parts of Derbyshire, but would only rank as inferior scenery in Norway. We passed through a number of extensive pine forests, crossing here and there at intervals in their breaks, far above the beds of fiercely rushing streams, down which the fir trunks, stripped and barked ready for the saw mill, were dashing on their headlong way to the sea.

At times a block occurred where the water was too shallow to float them over a rapid, and it was by no means a rare thing to see hundreds of them piled up one above the other in fantastic confusion, awaiting the time when the autumnal rains should come and sweep them with resistless force away.

We arrived at Eidsvold a little after midday, having been four hours accomplishing the forty-five miles—a fact due not so much to the slowness of speed, as to the constant, and to say the truth, unnecessary stoppages.

At nearly every station there were rows of women with refreshments in the shape of cakes, milk, and such fruits as were in season, which met with extensive patronage. For two or three skillings one could buy a little tray, ingeniously fashioned from the bark of the silver birch, filled with strawberries and other fruit.

Nor was the important matter of "*restauration*" left to outside caterers. In every carriage, which was divided into a double compartment, there was fixed a water jar placed just under the roof, in the space occupied in ours by the lamp. At each side was a tap with drinking glasses attached to it by chains. We found the water at starting of icy coldness, but the temperature rose rapidly under a burning sun, and was most unpleasantly warm by the time we arrived at Eidsvold.

The Miösen lake, on which we were about to adventure, is the largest of the many thousand lakes that Norway possesses, having a length of seventy-five miles, with a varying width of from two to seven. Its course extends in a north westernly direction, almost in the direct line between Christiana and Trondhjem. Two passenger steamers ply daily on its bosom for three-fourths of the year ; but, save in exceptionally mild seasons, it is frozen from December until March, and the journey must then be made either by land or in sledges over its frozen surface.

Its reputation in the olden time was very great, and in the old Sagas, the most wonderful, not to say Munchausenish, tales are recounted of the unfathomable depths of its waters, and its fish producing powers, and among them it is curious to note that the belief in the "great sea serpent" began in Norway at a very early period.

Peter Clausen, who wrote at the close of the 16th century says:—"There is said to be in the lake an old snake or serpent fifty ells long, that only sheweth itself when any wonderful event is about to take place in the kingdom."

From our own experience we can state that this belief has by no means disappeared, but on the contrary rather increased. All Norwegians we spoke with on the subject, and many of them most intelligent men, professed themselves as confident of the animal's existence as of their own ; and among the marine population of the western fiords, there is hardly a fisherman who at some period or another of his life, has not "with his own veritable eyes" beheld this apocryphal monster.

The Miösen, although an inland lake, and looking in fine weather as placid and harmless as a duck pond, has yet an evil reputation for the sudden and tremendous storms that at times rage on it. The old chronicler already quoted says quaintly of it:—"It is a perilous and unlucky lake, and taketh away the lives of many folk, being

gloomy and terrible to see, and far more dangerous to sail upon than the salt sea itself, for the fierce *Huirel* (whirl) winds and the mountain blasts sweep down upon it, and fresh water (remarks this sage oracle) becometh stormy much more quickly than salt."

The march of civilization has done nothing to alter it for the better, and it must be confessed that the character given it by Master Peter, is not at all drawn in too dark colors. It seemed hard to believe that the glassy sheet in which houses, trees, and mountains were reflected as in a mirror, could ever be lashed into waves that rose higher than the steamer's funnel. One lady, who had had a long experience of its treacherous and boisterous character, told us that on one occasion they were tossed about for four hours on the lake without being able to land, and at the imminent risk of being every moment dashed against its rocky shores.

Happily we were destined to see it in its milder mood, and our voyage up to the lake was of a very uneventful nature.

For the first part of it we were crowded to excess, but gradually decreased our numbers at the numerous places at which the steamer touched, pursuing for that purpose a zig-zag course from shore to shore. Touched, however, is a slightly figurative expression, as, save in one or two instances, we simply stopped the engines as we came abreast of the stations, and

the intending passengers came out in huge, unwieldy row boats, spacious enough to carry twenty or thirty people and their belongings, and which took back on their return those who wished to land.

The scenery of the Miōsen must be judged of by comparison. To those who have seen nothing but our quiet English landscapes, and are making by this route their first acquaintance with the beauties of Norway, it may perhaps bear out the extravagant praise bestowed on it by "Murray," but for our own part, it must be owned, we found it somewhat tame after the magnificent fiord scenery of the west coast that we had passed through on our previous trips.

The mountains surrounding the lake are low and unbroken in outline, presenting for nearly its entire length an almost unbroken range. Pine forests cover the summits, and where the rocks descend precipitously they retain their green mantle to their base, so that the trees seem to spring out of the water.

Where the side of the hills are less steep, the country becomes more open, and is mapped out in clearings and cultivated land—substantial farm homesteads dotting the surface at surprisingly short intervals, so that, as a writer in *Blackwood* lately remarked, Norway, in spite of its having but twelve inhabitants to the square mile, is one of

the most thickly populated countries in the world, if we consider its numbers merely with regard to the land that is available for cultivation and human habitation.

The land on the shores of the Miösen is some of the most fertile in Norway, a far larger portion than elsewhere being reclaimed, and devoted to agricultural purposes, and its farmers have the reputation, and we believe not an undeserved one, of being the best in the country.

Very fine sturdy fellows these same farmers are, and with splendid appetites of their own, to judge from the specimen we had of their powers at dinner, which was served in the cabin, and to which owing to our numbers we had to go down in relays.

Having taken the precaution of ordering our seats beforehand, when the rush came we followed calmly down and found places reserved for us.

The dishes were all handed round in the *table d'hôte* fashion, and although the *spise kart* was not an extensive one, every thing was exceedingly well cooked and served.

Soup we had none, but there was some excellent boiled salmon, with roast mutton to follow, and we were not limited to a single serve, the dishes twice making the circuit of the table. There were vegetables of various kinds, capital potatoes and peas, and these were eaten not in the French fashion, separately, but with the fish and meat, in the

way that most commends itself to our good old English prejudices.

The deep-seated reverence for pies and puddings that is so firmly implanted in every British breast, has not yet been vouchsafed to the Norwegians, but *en revanche* they gave us a very good substitute in the shape of *multebær* (the Scotch cloudberry), which beaten up into a mass, with the addition of cream and sifted sugar, made up a very dainty dish.

These berries, which appear on every dinner table, are somewhat larger than raspberries, and of a bright yellow colour. They grow in turf bogs in elevated situations, improving in size and flavour the nearer they approach the North pole. The plant flowers in June, soon after the snow has melted, and the fruit scarcely ripens in August, before it is again overwhelmed with its winter covering.

By northern nations the "*multebær*," is esteemed a most grateful and useful fruit, and its flavour by the Norwegians is thought superior to that of the strawberry, though most English people would give their verdict for the latter.

The Laplanders preserve them by burying them under the snow, but in the southern districts they are made into a jam, which is almost as delicious as the fresh berries. Immense tracts of country, both in Lapland and the Loffoden Isles, are covered with them, and so important an article of diet are

they as to have had a special Act of the Storthing devoted to them, which, amongst other restrictions, forbids anyone (other than the proprietor) to gather more than he can eat on the spot.

In Sweden, vinegar is made from them by fermentation, and they are also said to possess medicinal properties, Dr. Clarke, in his *Northern Wanderings*, attributing his recovery from a dangerous illness to their curative powers. A sprig of this plant is also the badge of the Highland clan MacFarlane.

After dinner, coffee was handed round as we sat on deck under the grateful awning, with just sufficient breeze to temper the burning sun that beat down on us from an unclouded sky, for it is altogether a fallacy to suppose, as many do, that there is no warm weather in Norway. True, the summer is a short one, but what it lacks in length, it makes up in strength, and it is not an unusual thing in some of the sheltered valleys for them to commence the harvest before we do in England, the crops being often sowed, ripened, and reaped, in from eight to nine weeks. The temperature often rises as high as 108° Fahrenheit, but is much more endurable than our close summer heat.

There was a fair sprinkling of English among our number in the first cabin; but the great majority were natives, many of them city folk from Christiania, bound for their annual holiday

among the mountains, which are equivalent with them to our seaside resorts.

Norway has—as we understand it—not a watering place on its whole extent of sea-board. The rocks run down precipitously to the water, leaving not a vestige of sand, on which bathing machines can manœuvre, or juveniles ply their spades. Hence, when the summer heats begin, all who can afford it make tracks for the interior, and locate themselves among the farmers, many of whom turn their dwellings into boarding houses, and take in guests for the season.

The Norwegians are a thrifty race, and the sums which we in England are accustomed to expend on our yearly outings (now *de rigueur*) would astonish them. On the other hand, it will excite the envy of an English paterfamilias, when we tell him that within 72 hours of Bow Bells, he can be boarded and lodged for the ridiculously small sum of ten dollars per month, or a trifle over ten shillings per week. For this he would not, perhaps, fare as sumptuously as at Scarborough or London-super-Mare ; the nearest comparison we can make at home, would be to liken it to a Scotch Highland Inn, and there the bill of a single night would sweep away the cost of a week's sojourn in the more unsophiscated country.

Midway the lake widens out into an imposing sheet of water—seven miles in width—and equi-

distant from either shore is Helgō (Holy Island), which had in old Catholic times a Benedictine Monastery on it, of which all traces have long since disappeared.

Nearly opposite to it on the mainland, we made a halt for a few minutes at the little town of Hamar, formerly a place of considerable importance, and the seat of a Bishopric. The Swedes in one of their numerous incursions into Norway (for previous to their Union in 1814, they used to live such a dog and cat life as we did with the Scotch up to 1603,) levelled it with the ground in 1567, and it was eventually deserted by its inhabitants ; the present town having only risen a few years since on the ashes of its predecessor.

The only attraction it possesses are the ruins of the ancient cathedral, built in the twelfth century, and which are just visible from the lake. All that now remains of it are three massive pillars and the arches that connect them, and one may judge of the scale on which it was built, from the fact that the outstretched arms of three men can scarcely clasp them round.

It is almost needless to say that so utter and complete a disappearance is not so much owing to the ravages of time as to the Vandalism of the last three centuries, for even in the seventeenth, although in a ruinous condition, it was complete in all its details. The glorious west front, with its

richly carved portals, was yet intact, together with a multitude of chapels and flying buttresses.

But that age was a period of decadence when church conservation, much less restoration, had fallen to the lowest ebb, and thus, instead of any attempt being made to save the grand old pile from decay, it seems to have been looked upon as a sort of "happy hunting ground," where any one who had building on hand could procure an unlimited supply of stone, hewn, and ready for his use. Several churches in the neighbourhood were in this way erected, and as they rose so Hamar fell, and was only saved from utter destruction by the advent of a less iconoclastic age.

It is the lament of Norwegian writers that a similar fate has befallen the majority of their ancient ecclesiastical buildings, hardly a stone now remaining upon a stone to show where in Catholic days the voice of praise resounded from many a fair abbey, the sites of which are now grass grown and forgotten.

We were now fast approaching the northern end of the lake, and the mountains began gradually to increase in height and grandeur. The time, however, hung somewhat heavily upon our hands, (the best possible test of the effect of scenery upon the mind), and when news was brought by an enquiring mind who had been making a voyage of discovery on the fore-deck, that some singing was

going on, we all rose *en masse*, and rushed to where the *al fresco* concert was proceeding.

It was the general hope that we might hear some of the popular patriotic airs, one or two of which are said to have as great an effect upon the Norwegians, among whom the love of home and country is very strong, as the *Ranz de Vaches* has on the Swiss.

We were, however, destined to be disappointed. The "Programme" was all sacred music, consisting principally of Swedish Hymns taken from a collection entitled "Songs of a Pilgrim to the Heavenly Zion," which are very popular in the eastern districts near the Swedish frontier, being there easily understood, although the two languages are in many respects dissimilar.

They were sung to very simple airs, but with a most touching, almost melancholy cadence, which was most effective. The majority present were of the peasant class, and nearly all seemed familiar with the words, and joined in them with a zest and fervour that it did one good to witness. The leader, or rather leaders, were four sturdy *bönder*, whose qualification for the post lay in the fact of their possessing stronger lungs than their fellows. They sang two hymns very sweetly, and eventually, at the request of the English visitors through ourselves as spokesman, they added one or two more.

It was a solemn and peculiar scene, to which the romantic nature of our surrounding lent additional interest. But far more striking than the overhanging mountains, seeming now to shut us from the outer world, and which the lake most perfectly reflected on its ruffled surface, was the earnest emotional look depicted with varied expression on every face of the dense group. Even those of our countrymen (ignorant of the words they were listening to,) showed that the touching soul-stirring strains had found an echo in their hearts, but in each Norwegian face there was such an intense depth of religious enthusiasm as fairly to thrill us. Tears stood in the eyes of even strong men, and the women (heavy featured and expressionless at ordinary times) were now made positively beautiful by the fervour and devotion that shone in every feature.

From subsequent enquiries we found that the hymns sung were not those used in the Lutheran liturgy, but a collection that had been drawn up for private use when they meet together in their social gatherings, or on such casual occasions as the present.

Among the audience, and joining heartily in the singing, were two or three of the clergy, who are called by the same name as in pre-reformation times—*prests*, spelt and sounded almost like our word priest.

We arrived about 8 p.m. at the extreme northern point of the lake. The landing stage was a mile away from Lillehammer, but two or three carriages, each drawn by a pair of horses, were waiting to carry passengers and their baggage up to the two hotels of which the town boasts.

Although the day was far gone, several of our English fellow travellers pushed on at once for the interior, the idea most of our countrymen have of seeing Norway being to rattle through it at the top of their speed. We had been rather amused on the steamer at the spectacle of an old lady—we beg her pardon, but the truth will out—accompanied by a stalwart son, and a daughter who was busily employed in mastering the rudiments of Norsk out of a huge tome. From their conversation we judged them to belong to that section of English society that is always on the move over the Continent, knowing no rest, and, like “unquiet spirits,” ever hurried on by some relentless fate from pole to pole.

Like nine-tenths of the English who pass through Christiania, they had fallen into the hands of Bennett, who exercises a paternal despotism the most absolute and complete over the British tourist in Norway. To them his authority is undisputed, and his word as the law of the Medes and Persians. “He says to one, go, and he goeth, and to another, do this, and he doeth it.” And so, when we saw this

ancient dame intently studying an official looking paper which seemed to have for her a species of charm, we at once felt intuitively that it bore the sign manual and imprimatur of King Bennett, and was for the next month at least her book of fate, telling her what she should see, eat, drink, and avoid.

Being from our knowledge of the country looked upon as a person of some experience, we were favoured with a sight of the precious document. It was drawn up in the form of an itinerary, giving the distances from place to place, apportioning out each day's journey, and indicating the particular station at which she should breakfast, dine, and sleep. As far as it went, it was a most useful compilation, and admirably adapted to save a person of weak intellect or insufficient mental calibre from the slightest possible trouble.

Mr. Bennett, however, is by no means an easy task master, and travelling under his auspices is anything but *couleur de rose*. In drawing up his programme to be got over, he evidently reckons to a large extent on that interesting weakness of the British tourist (before alluded to), which aims at covering the greatest amount of ground in the smallest possible time.

It was so in the present instance. The distance set down to be posted each day varied from forty to fifty miles, which even on our level roads would be no trifle for a stout elderly lady to undergo, and

the labour and fatigue were likely to be augmented fourfold on the hilly roads and in the primitive chariots of the country she was about to traverse, kept up, as it would be for a month, without intermission.

Our opinion was then invited as to the practicability of the route laid out, and if we didn't think it a "leetle" too much for her to get through in the given time.

There seemed to be a lingering doubt on her mind on this last point, and so, after expressing our perfect approval of the route sketched out for her, we were just about to tell her that to do what was set down on her way bill, she would have to work like a galley slave. But we did not. We allowed second thoughts to prevail, feeling sure that our advice would be thrown away, and have no chance against the omnipotent Bennett's, and only result in giving the old dame *un mauvais quart d'heure*.

The whole party rolled away northwards the same evening; mother, son, daughter, and suite, the said suite consisting of a solemn looking Norskman, who united in his person the offices of coachman, valet, courier, *talk* (interpreter), and servant of all work.

We were glad to stretch our legs on *terra firma* after our long ride, and throwing our modest knapsack into the vehicle appertaining unto

Ormsrud's Hotel, we struggled up the steep hill which leads to the town—a title which can only be awarded it by courtesy, as it consists but of one long straight street of wooden houses, with a population of some 1200 souls. It boasts of having seen better days, and lays the decline of its fortunes to the same cause as that of its big namesake down the lake, viz.: the incursions of the Swedes.

It is these gentry—who in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries must have been “mighty unpleasant neighbours”—that plead guilty to the destruction of the cathedral and monastery that formerly existed here. They possess an interest for Englishmen, as having been built about 1160 by a countryman of our own, Nicholas Breakspear, at that time Papal Legate in Norway, and who was afterwards elevated to the Papedom under the title of Hadrian IV.—the only Englishman who ever wore the tiara.

We had heard that there was a waterfall worth a visit, a short distance over the hills, so having secured rooms at the hotel, we got a boy, in order to save time, to run on before us and show the shortest cut to the *Mesna Fos*, as it is called, *Fos* in Norwegian being equivalent to fall.

For the first few hundred yards our path was along a by road which ran at a very steep incline up to a mountain farm; we then struck off to the right across some broken ground, intersected by

sundry walls and ditches, over which our guide—who was a lively little fellow rejoicing in the name of Olaf (a favourite prefix in Norway)—climbed like a squirrel. We soon got within ear-shot of the roar of the *Fos*, and the smoke which over-hung it—as from a steaming cauldron—also plainly indicated its whereabouts. Our path was now a continual ascent, winding its tortuous course along the steep banks of the stream, which beneath us dashed at a great pace lakewards.

A few steps further, and the summit of the rocks was gained that had hitherto hid the fall from our impatient gaze, and we could see it toppling down from the precipice above us, and burying itself in a deep and gloomy glen, the recesses of which the eye could scarcely penetrate. The mass of water was not of sufficient force to throw itself boldly into the chasm in one unbroken stream, but divided into a number of branches, which covered the entire face of the rock with a net-work as of frosted silver, the effect in the soft, waning light being lovely in the extreme. I had hard work to get my young companion, who had not yet seen thirteen summers, away from it: it was the first fall he had seen, and held him there as though spell-bound by its beauty, for after the first sight of the sea, as an epoch in a man's life, certainly comes that of a waterfall, and perhaps of a glacier, which, indeed, is but the former frozen into repose.

A sharp and sudden fall of the rain "peculiar to the country" quickened our retreating footsteps, and they were not the less vigorous from the time appointed for supper being close at hand. We found it progressing in the *spise salon*, the long tables of which were lined with many of our late fellow travellers; not the English contingent, however, for they invariably patronize the other hotel, near the lake yclept Hammers, as being rather more pretentious, and as a matter of course dearer.

We always make it a rule when travelling on the Continent to most carefully avoid the hotels frequented by our countrymen, who have an unhappy knack of demoralising every one they come in contact with.

The first glance at the supper table was quite bewildering, from the variety of dishes that presented themselves for our choice; such an *embarras de richesse* was it, as fairly to puzzle us where to begin first.

On taking closer observations, however, we soon found that the seeming over flowing abundance was more imaginary than real. There was enough, indeed, and to spare, of fish, flesh, we were going to add fowl, but that was absent, served up in a multiplicity of ways. There were lake trout with the flesh of a pink color, and the smaller river trout which were white, and boiled eggs which issued from

the recesses of a porcelain hen (colored after life), that we do not as yet seemed to have domesticated in England, though they are common in Norway and other parts of the continent.

When we had taken the "wire edge" off our appetites, and began to get more critical, we soon discovered that by far the greater number of dishes were to act more as appetite ticklers than as *pieces de resistance*. Although the appearance of many of their contents was not inviting, we were determined to do at "Rome as Rome did," and imitating our right hand neighbour, who was most impartial in his attentions, we dashed at them courageously, and found that like many other things in life, they were not half so bad as they looked.

The sardines, anchovies, and German sausages, were old acquaintances at home, and required therefore no introduction. It was the purely national dishes that were the most peculiar, not only in look—but as we discovered on trial—in taste also. They were for the most part shred up into the most waferish of slices ; doubtless on the principle that a little of them went a great way, which as far as the raw smoked salmon, and the dried ham and mutton (also innocent of cooking), was concerned, it most certainly did.

In the matter of fluids, tea and coffee were the favourite beverages. The latter is made uncom-

monly well all over Norway ; but the tea—at least in the country parts—is not so skilfully compounded, and tastes, in addition, more like some ingenious product of the chemist's art, than good honest Souchong or fragrant Bohea.

Öl (ale) was also extensively patronized, and small blame to them for it, for a brisker, pleasanter, more insinuating fluid than this same *Baiersk öl* it would be hard to find in any of the countries that swear allegiance to King Barleycorn. Although named after the celebrated Bavarian beer, it is entirely a native product, being brewed at Christiania and Bergen, whence it finds its way into most parts of the interior that are not too far away from the main roads. It is sold in bottles holding about a pint and a half, the retail price being something less than fivepence-half-penny, so that it is cheap enough to be the popular drink. It is one of the things that most Englishmen take to at once, some preferring it even to their native Bass and Allsop.

There are, we believe, one or two agencies for the sale of it in London, but it is, we should fancy, too light to bear well the sea transit. Its one drawback is, that it has at times a strong resinous flavour, from the barrels in which it stands previous to bottling. A slight sensation of this is not unpalatable ; it is only when there is too strong a dose that it gets objectionable.

In asking for it in the country districts, the

prefix *Baiersk* must not be forgotten, as from the fact of the Norwegians being great beer drinkers most farmers have their own private breweries, the produce of which they naturally esteem highly, having doubtless followed the same recipe from the days of the Vikings and Bersekers, whose recreation after a hard fought field, was to quaff draughts of potent ale from the skulls of their slaughtered enemies, finding it we should imagine a somewhat "heady" mixture.

Our own experience of the local taps was not, we must confess, favorable. True, with regard to most of them, we only indulged in sips, and Mr. Swiveller (a good authority) has laid it down as an undisputed axiom that "beer can't be tasted in a sip."

Still, in one or two instances where the eye of the proprietor was upon us as we raised the foaming tankard—this is "sorter ironical," as poor Artemus Ward used to say—to our lips, and we wished to be extra polite, we took, not without apprehensions for the after consequences, "a modest quencher," which authorises us in stating that its prominent defect (setting aside a host of others) is, that to quote another high authority "it is more flatterer than it might be."

CHAPTER III.

Through Norway with a Knapsack.—Entrance to the Gulbrandsdal.—Wayside Jottings.—A Norwegian Interior.—An Upset.—Decline of Salmon Fishing.—Bakkejordet.

JULY 3rd. We had determined over night to make an early start, so as to get well on our walk ere the sun was too high in the heavens. Two Norwegian ladies with whom we had made acquaintance on the steamer were going some thirty miles up the country for their *Villegiatura*, and gave us an invitation to pay them a visit *en passant* on the morrow, and they did us the additional favor of taking on our knapsack to our resting place for the night, in their travelling carriage.

In the first instance ours was to have been ostensibly a walking tour, but as our time was limited, we wisely determined, taking into consideration the distance to be got over, to intersperse it with an occasional drive, walking through the more picturesque and romantic scenery, and posting when it became less striking and interesting.

We found this a capital plan, combining the advantages of both systems, our day's work being generally laid out so as to do the walking in the

cool of the morning and evening, and the riding during the mid-day heat. Another advantage our increasing experience of the country gave us was that of disposing of our baggage.

Book upon book has been written of the charms of a journey on foot—knapsack on back and stick in hand—of the free and independent pedestrian, unshackled by any of the conventionalities that bind down the ordinary traveller. Indeed, one of the most practical and delightful records of Norwegian travel is a “Tour through Norway with a knapsack,” which has even received the honor of a translation into Norsk.

It was the perusal of its pages that had seven years ago first turned our thoughts and eventually our steps northwards, and we shall not easily forget the burst of youthful enthusiasm which carried us triumphantly through every difficulty. We tramped from Bergen to Christiania, some 250 miles of hard walking, bearing our fardels on our backs every inch of the way, and feeling proud of the achievement as a deed of “derring do.”

Increasing years, however, and successive visits, somewhat modified our ideas, and determined us to try if it were not possible to accomplish a “Tour through Norway without a knapsack,” by the simple process of getting some one else (man or beast) to carry it instead of our own noble selves.

Let us here anticipate a little, and say that the result was so eminently satisfactory as to strengthen and confirm us in the resolution of never on any of our future excursions converting ourselves into the semblance of a travelling packman.

The thing was easily managed. The traffic along the high roads is continuous, and from morning till night a constant stream of vehicles is passing along them. Accompanying each conveyance is the *skyds gut* (post boy), who can, however, hardly be said to correspond with our postilion, as he never drives save when requested, but is seated on a board at the back of the carriole, in company with the baggage.

The *skyds gut* is generally a diminutive urchin, the lighter the better, although we have not unseldom had a heavy full grown man, and in the out of the way districts it is not at all uncommon in the absence of a "male critter" for a strapping damsel to officiate in the capacity. The *skyds guts* are like most boys, always ready to earn a penny, and through their medium we had no difficulty, for a payment of three or four skillings per stage, in sending our knapsack on from station to station, right through the country.

The proverbial honesty of the Norwegian character was a sufficient safeguard against its being stolen or tampered with. At times, when there was a scarcity of travellers going our way, we used

to leave it in charge of the landlady, giving her the address we wanted it forwarding to, and never once did we have the slightest trouble in recovering it.

When in our progress, we met parties of students from the University doing their vacation rambles, and staggering along under loads that would tax the strength of an English navvy, we never failed to congratulate ourselves on our own care and forethought.

The sun shone out brilliantly as we left Lillehammer, and struck off on the great Northern road. The effects of the night's rain still sparkled on every leaf and blade of grass, and the air fairly reeked with the scent of the innumerable wild flowers which clothed every ditch and bank with a variegated carpet.* Before us was the opening of the Gulbrandsdal valley, one of the most extensive in the country, which stretches for 170 miles.

We halted again and again to admire the lovely views, ever changing and varied, of the lake and the environs of Lillehammer, which were, however, soon lost to sight. The road was carried some way up the mountain side, and a mile or two from the town skirted the bank of the river Logen, a fine

* The most abundant were the wild pansy, larkspur, columbine, and two or three varieties of the stone crop. At times we came upon clumps of the stately great Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) growing to a height of several feet. The Norwegians call it the King's taper (*kongelys*), a name by which it is still known in many parts of England.

wide rushing stream, with its waters of that exquisite light blue that is rarely seen save in glacier or snow water.

The valley here was wondrously fertile, every available inch being cultivated nearly to the mountain summits, and the homesteads and hamlets of two or three wooden houses (for they never arrived at the dignity of villages) were very frequent. The heat was intense, and often drove us into the shade of the frequently recurring woods. At constant intervals were drinking troughs for the horses and cattle, the water supply being brought down the mountain sides in a series of wooden spouts, and a similar plan is extensively used in some districts to irrigate the land.

The Norwegian roads are pleasant to walk on, as, being made for the most part of gravel, there is seldom any dust; and the heaviest rainfall soon drains off as through a cullender, so that they are generally in good condition.

The task of keeping them in order devolves on the occupiers of land in the neighbourhood, and at every few hundred yards along the road side are black posts, on which are inscribed the name of the farm, with the parish and ward in which it stands, and the number of *Alen* (two feet) that the proprietor has to keep in repair.

The sides of the roads are generally bordered with a strip of turf, and there are no hedges as

with us, but merely a ditch and low bank, which do not shut in the road, but allow an uninterrupted view of the surrounding prospect.

We saw but few birds, and those of the ordinary English varieties ; after the swallows and sparrows, the pied wagtail and wheat ear predominate, the sharp note of the latter soon becoming a familiar roadside accompaniment.

One peculiar feature is the way in which the magpies congregate in the neighbourhood of the farmsteads, where they seem to be regarded in the light of household pets, even the irrepressible boys holding them in respect. The place of our rook (which is unknown in Norway) is filled by the Royston or hooded crow (*corvus cornix*), which is almost as domesticated as the magpie, and would settle fearlessly within a few yards of us in the coolest manner.

Butterflies of the commoner English sorts were in great abundance ; the common whites indeed were scarce, the majority being Meadow Browns, and varieties of the gracefully marked Fritillaries.

My companion, an ardent entomologist, was in his element, and rushed about in the most excited manner, his enthusiasm being so catching, that I found myself imitating his example, and, in spite of the thermometer being at something over 85° in the shade, giving chase to an extra fine specimen,

which baffled my clumsy efforts in the most airy and ingenious manner, and finally, after a two hundred yards burst, floated away into the valley, leaving me hot, weary, and not at all disinclined for refreshment, in whatever shape it might present itself.

At the next group of farm houses, therefore, we made a halt, and selecting the most comfortable looking one, knocked, and enquired if we could have some milk.

Our arrival had been heralded by a chubby young gentleman playing in the yard outside, who informed us that his name was *Johannes* (John), and whom we enlisted in our favor, by giving him out of our stock of presents (which must not be omitted from the tourist's list of preparations) a gorgeously colored picture, upon which he instantly rushed indoors to display his treasure.

We were met on the threshold by the woman of the house, with our friend *Johannes* peeping at us from behind her skirts, and at her invitation we entered the kitchen, or living room, which was a picture of rustic plenty, its rafters hung with flitches of bacon, and sides of *spekke-kjöd* (dried mutton); while the shelves running round it were loaded with piles of *ny og gammel ost* (new and old cheese).

One end of the kitchen was almost filled up by an immense hearth, nearly identical in shape with

those in old country houses at home, only that here instead of their use being obsolete they are still masters of the field, patent ranges not having as yet penetrated into the interior.

The shining rows of crockery that garnish the dressers of our English kitchens were here replaced by wooden platters and bowls, in the latter of which is eaten the thick *suur melk* (sour milk), which, with *gröd* (oatmeal porridge), forms a large proportion of the food of the peasantry. A spinning wheel stood in one corner of the room, for though out of date with us, save in the retired districts of Scotland and Ireland, they are used here in every cottage away from the towns.

Through the open window we could see another invariable adjunct to every Norwegian house, in the black smoke-dried hut in which the *flad-bröd* is manufactured and baked. This *flad-bröd*, literally flat bread, is the universal substitute for bread throughout the entire country. Its component parts vary somewhat in the different districts, but the usual materials are barley, rye, and oat meal, the latter predominating.

A stiff paste is first made, which is rolled out into sheets some four or five feet square, and about the thickness of a shilling. Flour is then sprinkled over them with a dredger, and they are placed on a large flat iron plate (like that called in Ireland a griddle) raised about two feet from the ground,

and on which they are subjected to the heat of a quick fierce fire till sufficiently baked.

When cold they rattle like sheets of paste board, and look for all the world like gigantic cakes of brandy-snap gingerbread that have turned mouldy from over keeping. A sufficient supply is made at one baking for the monthly supply of the family, which is stored away in huge drawers, care being taken to keep it in a dry place, as it loses its palatableness with its crispness, and becomes soft and flabby, having a flavour as of old hat or some equally tasteless material.

We had barely time to take a note of all this, when a door was thrown open, and we were ushered into what was evidently the "best parlour," a bright airy room, in striking contrast to the kitchen we had left, with white curtains festooned around the French windows (our guillotine sash is unknown in Norway), and the prettily papered walls hung with prints and a perfect gallery of photographic likenesses, which latter feature is a great weakness of the Norwegians in the country parts, where, instead of being presented with the family circle bound in morocco, you have the advantage of being introduced to them *en masse*.

As they had no milk to give us, the cows being away at the *sæters* on the mountain tops, they brought us a jug of their home brewed ale, which bore on trial such striking resemblance to ditch

water, that we could make no way with it. Seeing this, our polite hostess produced from the press a bottle of red currant wine (*ribs viin*), which, mixed with some icy-cold water, made a very pleasant beverage. A plate of wafer-like cakes (*kron-kager*) were also offered, that seem peculiar to Norway, and are made in a brass mould, which prints on them a variety of patterns; when filled with paste the mould is closed and thrust into a fierce fire, which gives the cakes a crisp short flavour.

The good man of the house came in while we were thus agreeably occupied, and we had a pleasant chat with him, as far as our limited vocabulary permitted. On leaving they would not for a moment hear of any remuneration, so we paid in kind, with a few trifling gifts of needles, &c., which pleased them mightily. A mutual interchange of *tak* (thanks), a hearty shake of the hand,—which is the invariable custom after any gift, however small,—and we were on the road again.

We passed the first mile stone about mid-day—slow progress our readers may think—but the Norwegian miles are like the Scotch, “unco’ long ones,” measuring no less than seven of our own.

The river now ran at a great distance below us, and its hitherto smooth though swift current, was broken up by a magnificent cascade, its entire surface for nearly a hundred yards being churned into a mass of snow-white seething foam by the

masses of rock over which the water rushed. Innumerable trunks of pine and fir were being hurried down the stream towards the rapids, and it was a grand sight to watch them whirled into the wild abyss of waters, disappear for a time, and rise again to the surface after a lengthened dive, to pursue their journey seawards. Now and again an unfortunate tree was caught on a point of rock, and held suspended in mid air, while others were kept prisoners in eddies of the fall, and swept round in a never ending circle.

Our internal monitors warned us that dinner-time had long passed, and we were not therefore sorry to get to the first *station* Aronsveen, which lay up a lane, some little distance off the main road.

Every station has its reputation carefully set forth in the Guide Books, and a considerable element in the traveller's comfort in Norway will be due to the judgment he shows in selecting the good ones, and giving a wide berth to the bad and indifferent. Of our present station neither Bennett nor the *Lomme Reise Route* said a word, and when that is the case the verdict may invariably be looked upon as unfavourable.

These stations, which are the only inns Norway possesses away from the towns, are nearly always kept by farmers, who contract with the government to supply a certain number of horses and wheeled conveyances to run for hire at a tariff fixed by law.

On the principal roads all the stations are what is called fast, that is, the postmaster (*skydskaffer*) is bound under penalty to have horses ready for instant use. On the roads that are not so frequented the stations are called slow, and with reason, as the traveller has often to wait some two or three hours while the horses are being fetched from their field work miles away on the mountain side.

In addition to the agreement the station-holder enters upon of providing for the locomotion of travellers, he is also expected to supply their bodily wants, and furnish them with board and lodging when required. The accommodation depends very much on the character of the proprietor. If he be a rich well to do farmer, or has travelled and emancipated himself from old world notions by a visit to America, as many of them have, he will have picked up some notion at least of the appointments a traveller will expect to find in a civilized caravansery, and as a matter of fact many of the stations owned by men of this class can vie for convenience and comfort with the inns of any country in the world.

On the other hand, where the station-master is either poor or content to plod on in the same way as his fathers before him, the susceptibilities of the tourist (especially if he has been clothed in purple and fed sumptuously every day) will be

likely to receive a rude shock at the coarse lodging and still coarser fare provided for him.

Happily these latter are gradually getting few and far between, not the least cause for this being the ever increasing tide of English tourists. The Government also takes great interest in their improvement, and the Norwegians being as a race remarkably wide awake to the main chance, are finding out gradually that it is to their interest to incur a little trouble and expense for the sake of their visitors.

Our present station was undoubtedly a poor one, but the landlady made up for all deficiencies by her care and attention. We had on our arrival at once ordered *middags mad* (midday meat), adding an emphatic *oieblikkelig* (literally in the twinkling of an eye) to hasten matters,* as one of the national defects is that of extreme slowness, especially in culinary operations. The larder was but a limited one, and she could only give us eggs and bacon, which soon came in smoking appetisingly, and although the bacon was nearly raw, our hunger made us overlook the slight drawback and make a very satisfactory repast, our Arcadian feast being appropriately washed down with draughts of new milk.

* *Strax* (directly) is the favourite word with our countrymen to quicken the movements of the natives, but its signification is very indefinite, and may mean any space of time from an hour to a week.

The making out our bill could not have greatly taxed the ingenuity of our hostess, who was as innocent of the art of "charging" as a new born babe—eight skillings for the two of us, or, a penny-three-farthings each, being the enormous sum total we were amerced in.

We had determined to ride the next stage—one and a quarter Norsk miles—to Holmen, and found our *stol Kjærre* (stool car) waiting at the door.

In Norwegian travel the choice is confined between these and carrioles, and for one person the latter are always to be preferred, their lightness and simplicity of construction making them just the vehicle for a mountain country. They are usually built without springs, but the shafts are long and elastic, the ends being fixed on to the axle tree. The seat, which is only intended for one but can take two at a pinch, is placed well forward, and by cross pieces rests on the shafts, the elasticity of which prevents the occupants from being jolted, save on exceptionally bad roads. Seated in them the legs are brought nearly to a horizontal position, so that there is little danger of being thrown out in case of the horse falling.

The *stol Kjærre* is a much more primitive and roughly constructed affair, being simply a box upon wheels tacked together in the flimsiest manner. Indeed, the only difference between it and the carts used by the peasantry for agricultural purposes is

the *stol*, which is a seat with a back to it, on which, unless you want every bone in your body dislocated, you will take care to demand a cushion, for the absence of springs is not compensated as in the carriole, and the jolting—until after long and painful practice—is extremely hard to adapt one's self to.

The harness is scarcely more re-assuring than the rest of the equipment,—what little there is of it being composed of strips of rope, with reins of the same material, long enough to enable the *skyd's gut* behind to drive, should the occupant be too lazy or disinclined to do so.

The horses, or rather ponies (a species of cross between the Shetland and our own), are pretty quiet things, generally of a chestnut or light dun color, the manes nearly always cropped short, so that instead of falling down the neck, each particular hair stands on end “like quills upon the fretful porcupine,” giving them at first sight a most peculiar appearance.

Although without much fire or spirit, they are affectionate, docile little animals, and extremely sure-footed, having the proverbial steadiness of the mule. A most perfect understanding exists between them and their drivers, and the society for the suppression of cruelty to animals, that unhappily finds so much work to do at home, would certainly have a sinecure in Norway.

The Norwegians, when driving, rarely punish their little steeds, contenting themselves with encouraging them by voice and gesture, and knowing from experience the mania of our countrymen for fast travelling, they never trust them* with a whip if they can possibly avoid it. Indeed, the only time that we have ever beheld their stolid undemonstrative nature roused to excitement, has been at seeing their horses over-driven or ill used—a thing they resent as fiercely as they would a personal insult to themselves.

Our first essay upon wheels was destined to come to grief in a sudden and inglorious manner. One peculiarity of the Norwegian horses is that they require little or no driving, the reins being generally held loosely in the driver's hands, and the animal allowed pretty much its own way.

Depending upon this, on coming to the turn into the main road, at the corner of which, as ill luck would have it, there chanced to be an immense stone, we allowed our horse full freedom of action ; he calculated his distance badly, and turned rather too sharply, our off wheel came in collision with the stone, and over went our frail chariot on to its side, dragging with it the horse, and depositing us all in the middle of the road.

Fortunately we had been going at a slow pace, and there was but little damage done. I landed like a cat, on my feet, and in falling caught my com-

panion's collar, so that he escaped with a severe bruise from the side of the cart. The *skyds-gut* seemed perfectly unconcerned, evidently looking upon the upset as nothing unusual, and we all turned our attention to the horse, which lay on its side quite motionless, so that we at first feared all life was knocked out of him by the fall. The moment, however, he was released from the pressure of the shafts, he got up as quietly as if nothing had happened, and in another few minutes we resumed our journey.

Our ride was an extremely pretty one, the valley narrowing as we advanced, almost to a gorge, the sides of which were clothed with dense forests, through the breaks of which we could catch sight at intervals—far below us—of the clear, glancing waters of the *Logen*, now diminished from the wide, stately river of a dozen miles back, to a brawling, rushing stream.

The sudden change from the smiling, thickly populated country we had left, was very great; hardly a house was now to be seen, and the gentle mountain slopes, green with waving crops, gave place to rugged precipices, the steep sides of which allowed nothing—save the hardy pine—to take root and flourish.

The most striking feature of the Norwegian forests, to us who are accustomed in our own woods to the continual warbling of birds, is their intense solitude. One listens in vain for the soft notes of

the thrush and the blackbird, and the distant cooing of the wood-pigeons. A few colonies of field fares, although as a rule they prefer to build in the more dispersed thickets, and here and there a party of jays broke the silence with their chatter.

The latter part of our stage ran on the very edge of the precipice at a great height above the river's bed, and was a fine piece of engineering, cut out of the solid rock. It deviated so much from a straight course, that it was one continual succession of sharp turns, some of them so abrupt as to demand most wary steering, and as the experience of our unfortunate start had not been lost on us, we took good care to keep our steed well away from the corners, for which he seemed to have a remarkable predilection, a peculiarity, as our after experience assured us, by no means confined to himself.

The Norwegian rule of the road is just the reverse of our own, the right hand side, instead of the left, being the proper one to keep on. The general pace of the horses is by no means fast, a Norwegian mile in the hour being the highest speed that they can maintain, six English miles being as a rule the average. This is in a great measure due to the tremendous hills that constantly occur, which are so steep and continuous on some stages as to confine the pace to a walk for the entire distance, taking up what on the return journey may be perhaps done in half the time.

The most enjoyable feature of Norwegian chariotteering is the down hill part of the business, for the horses have a way of their own of getting to the bottom of a hill, and the style in which they rattle down a descent as steep as the roof of a house is, to quote our American friends, "a caution."

Up the ascents they creep slowly and surely, zig-zagging from side to side of the road, with an instinct that we commend to the notice of Darwin, until the summit being at last gained, they break into a quick trot which increases, till the pace is absolutely terrific. When the hills are sufficiently long to allow the speed to attain its full development, we shall not exaggerate in asserting that the ground is often covered by them at the rate of from fourteen to sixteen miles an hour, and that on ground where an English horse would come to grief ere it had gone ten yards.

The initiation for the novice is slightly nervous work, and we shall not easily forget our "first ride" when we were "fortunate" enough to make the descent of some of the worst hills between Bergen and Christiania, which is saying a great deal.

Like many other things in which *c'est le premier pas qui cout*, the first hill generally settles the matter, and by the time the bottom of the second is reached, one is ready to confess it a sensation which even in these days of sensation is worth experiencing. The seeming reality of the danger

only serves to add zest to the situation. True, if the horse were to stumble or fall one would be a "gone coon," but the little animals are so sure footed that an accident is a matter of very rare occurrence.

We stayed at Holmen, where we alighted only long enough to discuss a bottle of *Baiersk*, and finished up our day's work by walking to the next station, Bakkejordet, ten miles on.

The scenery for a time continued of the same wooded character, then the valley widened out, and the *Logen* river expanded into a series of narrow lakes called the *Losna Innsø*, along the edge of which the road was carried for the next fifteen miles. Twenty years ago a small steamer plied on them, but the traffic did not pay, and it was therefore discontinued, after running for some six or seven years.

The weather had now become dark and lowering, with heavy masses of rain-clouds piling themselves up ahead of us, but which fortunately only spent themselves in occasional showers. They blotted out, however, in great part the charming effect of the lovely panoramic view we should otherwise have had—the long vista of lake stretching away in front for a seemingly interminable length, embosomed in mountains which at every turn took more varied and fantastic forms. One that we could see on the extreme edge of the horizon, stood apart from the main range like a huge rocky

sentinel guarding the entrance to the pass, and was, as we afterwards found, immediately opposite the station we were making for.

Standing in a prominent position, perched upon the hills above us, was Tretten Church, the decorator of which, with a laudable design of rendering it a more striking feature in the landscape, had painted the nave and aisles a deep red ochre, and the spire a staring white, the whole effect of it against the back ground of vivid green being the reverse of picturesque, and a similar artistic taste seems to pervade most of the decorations of Norwegian country churches.

The road we were following had only been in existence some six years, a fact made known to us by seeing at intervals cut in large letters on the face of the rocks we passed—*Lom*, 1866, which stood for the name of the engineer and the date when the road was completed. We saw the same name many times during our subsequent progress, with various dates attached, from 1855 to 1870.

This process of changing old roads into new is constantly going forward, under the auspices of the Government, no less a sum than 225,000 dollars being yearly devoted to the purpose. The improvement thus effected is very great, for the old style of Norwegian road making was remarkably primitive, and judging from the remains of the old roads still existing, it seemed to have been the aim of their

constructors to try how steep it was possible to make them, short of the perpendicular.

In a carriage that dashed by us, near here, we fancied we recognized a familiar face, and on hailing him as a countryman, he pulled up. It turned out to be a gentleman named Penrose, whom we had met two years ago at Bergen. He was almost an annual visitor for the sake of the salmon fishing, being the lessee of a river farther north, whence he was returning homewards, rather earlier than usual. In spite of its being a bad "salmon year," he had bagged some 200lb. weight to his own rod, a contrast to the luck of some of the fishermen we met afterwards, who hardly caught sight of a fin their whole time out.

It seems to be of late a general complaint that salmon fishing on the whole is rapidly deteriorating in Norway. Year by year the prices paid for the rivers have risen, till it has at length come to the point that a Norwegian river is fully as expensive a luxury to indulge in as a Scotch Grouse moor. We have known £300 per season to be paid for a stream barely half a dozen miles in length, and even then saddled with the proviso of giving up the bulk of the fish taken to the proprietor of the river.

The worst of the matter is, that as prices have gone up the fish have gone down (in quantity), a result principally owing to the unprincipled conduct

of the natives themselves. Not content with the heavy sums in which they mulct the "mad Englishmen" (for such they consider them), they not only flog the waters most industriously during their absence, but also net them without mercy, particularly at the point where the rivers throw themselves into the fiords, and that with most melancholy success.

The Storthing, it is true, so early as 1857, awake to the evil results that would come to pass, should these practices remain unchecked—passed a law forbidding the use of nets at the mouths of salmon rivers. This law, however, has never been carried out in its integrity ; the fish are dwindling away to a tithe of their numbers twenty years ago, and the stupid proprietors—while chuckling over their present gains—will find when too late that they have been but giving another variation of the old fable, "killing the goose that laid the golden eggs."

We found Bakkejordet but a poor station, a fact perhaps accounted for by the fact of the host being a "genius," which made him overlook the more practical claims of his household. He dabbled in photography, and pointed with pride to the evidences of his skill decorating the walls of the *gjest-rum* (guest room).

He had also his own manufacture of hermetically sealed meats, principally ptarmigan, which he shot in large numbers on the neighbouring *fjelds* during

the winter, and utilized in this manner for summer use. We had a dish of them for supper, and must give him the credit of saying that they were remarkably good, and very little inferior in flavour to those freshly killed.

Our bed rooms here were mere closets, some ten feet by six, opening into the *gjest-rum* on the ground floor, and the windows being curtainless, with a constant ebb and flow past them of the inmates of the *station*, our toilette and ablutions were hardly conducted with that privacy we are accustomed to at home. In addition, our door, which was devoid of bolts, was several times abruptly opened, and in marched a *pige* (girl) with sheets, pillows, and other paraphernalia for bed making, the fact of one's being in rather extensive dishabille by no means serving as a safeguard against intrusion.

This unceremonious behaviour is at first somewhat startling to our notions of propriety, but there is no help for it, it is "the custom of the country," and any attempt at expostulation would only expose one's self to misunderstanding or ridicule.

We may be quite sure of one thing—that it is all done in perfect innocence, and to deduce from it any laxity of manners or morals would be to pass a very superficial judgment. The fault, if any, lies rather in our "insular ideas," having during the last century or two acquired a prudery and false delicacy which it is much to be feared are only surface deep.

CHAPTER IV.

A Visit to the Lensmand.—A Mountain Scramble.—Sinclair's Massacre.—A Lively *Skyds Gut*.—Pass of Kringelen.—Gorge of Rusten.—Toftemoen.—A descendant of Kings.—Dombeas.

JULY 4th. Just as we were off, we were accosted by a couple of Dutchmen who had driven in, requesting our services as interpreters. The "Mynheers" had lost an overcoat on their way from the last station, and being innocent of Norwegian, were unable to explain themselves, and make their loss known.

By far the largest proportion of the visitors to Norway from foreign shores are our own countrymen, who form certainly ninety out of every hundred, the rest being made up of Germans (who are thoroughly well hated in Scandinavia), Dutch, French, and other Continental nations, the proportion following the order in which their names are given.

The lake was again our constant companion for nearly the whole stage. We essayed our luck at fishing once or twice, but the water near the bank was too shallow, and our attempts were unsuccessful.

It was about here that our lady friends were staying, and we made as we advanced constant enquiries for the address they had given us. It did

not prove very difficult to find, for being the house of the *Lensmand* or Constable of the district, it seemed pretty well known to every man, woman, and child in the neighbourhood, and it was soon pointed out to us on the mountain side above us. A steep, but picturesque horse path led up to it, winding pleasantly through avenues of silver birch, with seats interspersed at intervals for visitors to rest on in their upward progress.

On reaching the house, which was surrounded by a neglected garden—for they are poor horticulturists in Norway—I, minus my companion, (who had elected to remain in the valley for sketching purposes) was ushered into the drawing room, in which sat three or four ladies, but among them neither of my friends. The ordeal was rather a trying one, but the politeness and good nature of the Norwegian ladies at once set me at my ease. I introduced myself and my errand in a slightly figurative manner, and in a few minutes we were chatting away—in spite of my “slight impediment in speech”—as if we had known each other for years.

Doubtless, in my attempts at clothing my thoughts in their Norsk dress, my blunders were many and egregious ; but as I always make a rule in talking a foreign language to throw overboard all *mauvaise honte*, and to charge the difficulties, as a fox hunter does a hedge, with a determination to

get over anyhow, I managed by hook or by crook to make myself understood.

One young lady had spent several years in England, and spoke English remarkably well. She was in the last stage of consumption, poor girl, and a mere shadow, but yet full of spirits and animation, and buoyed up by hopes of speedy convalescence, which, I fear, were not destined to be realized.

Presently, my two friends came in, and gave me a warm welcome. The *Lensmand* and his wife also made their appearance, and I was formally introduced to them, and to the rest of the company. The *Lensmand* was a short thick-set man, of nearly sixty, with a suavity of manner that he must have derived from his French extraction,—his ancestors, some few generations back, having migrated from France hither.

Herr Coucheron—for such was his name—gave us some interesting information as to the nature and extent of his office. As policeman of the district, his jurisdiction extended over a distance of three Norwegian miles along the valley, and five over the *fjelds*, or something over 700 English square miles; truly a moderate beat, and one that would make policeman X at home open his eyes in amazement.

The administrators of the law in the country parts of Norway are divided into three classes—the lowest grade are the *Lensmænd*, who, in

addition to acting as guardians of the peace, serve summonses and processes, arrest culprits, and in the minor civil as well as criminal cases are empowered to take depositions, hold preliminary hearings, and prepare them to be passed on to the superior courts.

The *Fogeds*, who are next in rank above the *Lensmaend*, hold an intermediate position, and are a sort of inferior magistrate. One of their duties is to pay the "head money" for the destruction of animals and birds of prey, the rewards for which figure each year for a good round sum in the expenses of the kingdom.

In 1855, the last year for which I have been able to consult the numbers—there were killed 205 bears, 235 wolves, 125 lynxes, 72 gluttons, and no less than 2559 eagles. The scale of payment is three dollars for each of the quadrupeds, and half a dollar for eagles. Several of the smaller species of the *feræ naturæ*, the mountain owl (*Strix Bubo* of *Linnæus*) and the many varieties of the hawks are also put under a ban, and great numbers are annually cut off, the reward for their extirpation being on a descending scale of twenty-four skillings per head.

Next above the *Fogeds* in rank come the *Soren-scrivers* who are the chief magistrates, and try all cases that are not sufficiently weighty to be sent to the superior courts for the decision of the judges

(*dommer*), whose sittings are confined to the five or six principal towns of the country.

The *Sorenscriver* is of course the great man of the district, his position as the principal government official and the emoluments of his post, which are very considerable for Norway, obtaining for him a large share of consideration and respect.

These and other topics of conversation whiled away the time till breakfast was announced, and we filed into another room, where a substantial repast was laid out. I tried to excuse myself from taking part in it by adducing the fact of a previous performance of the same nature some hour or two before, but the hospitality of my hosts would not be contented with seeing me a passive spectator.

It happened to be the birthday of Madame Szacinski, the elder of my two friends, and on our return to the drawing-room she disappeared for a moment and quickly re-appeared with a bottle in each hand, which she handed to the *Lensmand*, who promptly uncorking them in a workmanlike manner, filled up as many glasses as there were persons present.

In the mean time we were keeping discreetly in the back ground, affecting apparently, to ignore the fact of these festive preparations being for our benefit, and it was only when the lady whose natal day we were about to celebrate gave the signal, that we all coyly advanced and took each one a glass of

the "particular vanity" he preferred, the choice being limited to *port viin* and *rød viin* (port and claret).

Glass in hand, we now formed a half circle around the table, Madame standing entrenched on the other side facing us, her eyes seemingly intent on the pattern of the table cloth. One by one, each of us stepped forward, made a little congratulatory speech, bolted the contents of his or her glass, and retired to give place to the next, who went through precisely the same ceremony. "Tempus will fudge it," however, as poor Robson used to say, and I was fain, although unwillingly, to tear myself away from the "festive throng," and join my companion down in the valley.

I was well scolded for not having brought him up with me, and determined he should lose nothing by his absence, a party of the ladies gaily volunteered to act as my escort down the hill, bearing with them a perfect cornucopia of good things to comfort and console the "poor fellow."

They were a merry party, and nothing would suit them but that they must take a short cut down the mountain side, by which, with an infinity of laughing, shrieking, slipping, and stumbling, we soon gained the high road. The forlorn one turned up slightly disconsolate, but their smiles and "sweets" soon restored him to an amiable frame of mind. We made our adieux, with promises

of another visit should we return that way, and were once again *en route*.

We dined at Skjeggestad in the afternoon, having only walked, thanks to our morning's dissipation, a Norwegian mile and a half. From here we posted on to Listad (of which we shall have something to say on our return), and thence to Oien where we made our night's quarters.

The scenery had much the same character as heretofore—the lake had again given place to the *Logen*, which dashed along as lively as ever, and the smiling face of the glorious valley, which about Listad widened out to its fullest extent, was cultivated far up the mountain sides, the belts of pines fringing only the extreme summits, their dark green serving as an admirable setting to the lighter tints of the waving crops which were dazzling in their verdure.

Oien did not belie its reputation of being one of the best stations in Norway, for they gave us so sumptuous a meal of broiled trout, stewed veal, and other etceteras, as almost to incapacitate us from any after exertion.

The guest chambers here were two spacious rooms, opening into each other, furnished in quite a recherché style for Norway, with pier glasses, American rocking chairs, &c., and the walls covered with well framed prints of Chicago and other western cities, to which some of the family had lately emigrated. The French windows opened

on to a pretty little paddock, half garden, half orchard, with a gurgling, pellucid stream running through the middle of it.

The other buildings of the farmstead were all widely detached from each other, to guard against fire, and to reach our bed-rooms we had to cross the road to a low two-storied house that seemed entirely devoted to sleeping purposes.

The rooms were arranged in a peculiar fashion. From the staircase landing, a door gave access to the first of them, which opened again into the next and so on to the rest, till the round was made, so that the occupant of the innermost room to gain his couch would have to pass through three others, a process which might at times prove somewhat inconvenient if it were not for the primitive nature of the Norwegian character.

The station lay just at the foot of the mountain, which here projected a little from the main range, and we could see far, far away upon the highest slopes, some two thousand feet above, nests of huts in the midst of their several clearings, the blue wreaths of smoke curling lazily up, and the whole tableau so etherealized in the golden evening glow, that we could not resist the temptation of making our way up to them.

We might have followed the rough road used by the "dwellers in the highlands" when they want to cart their produce down to the valley, and which

by many a winding turn would have brought us to our goal, but we preferred to take a short cut up the mountain, and like young Lochinvar on his way to Netherby Hall—"stay not for brake, nor stop not for stone."

It proved to be a regular scramble. The first few hundred yards lay through a wood of silver birch, and so steep was the ascent that it was only by pulling ourselves up yard by yard, by aid of the tree trunks, that we managed to make any way at all. Out of this we followed a rough mountain path used by the shepherds and goat-herds, which brought us after an hour's climb to the first cluster of mountain farms, each one surrounded by its two or three acres of arable and pasture land.

The farmsteads themselves were but poor places, very different from the prosperous, well to do tenements of the valley. Theirs must, indeed, be a hard lot in such an exposed position. The summer is of course their brief time of comfort, but for the greater part of the year their life is one of constant struggle with the elements, the snow for five months being level with their roofs, and the rushing floods produced by its melting being a no less terrible enemy. To guard against this latter danger the houses are generally built upon stone pillars (as we often see ricks in England), leaving sufficient space for the water to flow beneath without flooding the houses.

As our climb had made us thirsty, we called at several of the farms in the hope of getting some milk, but the inmates evidently kept early hours, and were all in bed. Hearing voices in one, we knocked, when after a little delay, an old lady came to the door, whom from her dishevelled locks and scanty attire we judged was retiring for the night.

On preferring our request, she assented in a gruff manner, but on our saying that as we saw she was going to bed we would not trouble her, the old dame took us at our word, and deliberately slammed the door in our faces.

In our downward progress, we had a glorious view of the valley at our feet, and of the opposite slopes, lit up as they were by the now setting sun. Far away to the north-west towered a long range of snow-covered peaks, rising from the *Fotunfields* —a desolate and uninhabited tract of country—where for a space of more than 2,000 square miles the wanderer would find scarce a track to guide him, or a hut wherein to shelter.

We varied our path in descending, and had more than once to scale the palisadings with which the tiny fields of rye, clover, &c., were surrounded, to save them from the polite attentions of the goats that are allowed to graze on the unenclosed lands in freedom. These same palisadings are ticklish things to surmount, being about six feet high, and are constructed after the following method:—

Two thick stakes of pine, from seven to eight feet long, are driven firmly into the ground within an inch of each other, and repeated at intervals of four feet. Smaller sticks are then placed in a slanting position between the uprights, which serve as grooves to keep them in their place, and they are still further secured by their being bound together with twigs of osier ; when completed, it makes so compact a fence that a weasel could scarcely put its nose through. They cannot, however, boast of combining the ornamental with the useful, having a gaunt monotonous look, which made us long to see them replaced by our own pretty hedge rows, which are after all an exclusively English possession, and long distant may be the day when scientific farming shall improve them from the face of the country, and gain a few additional acres at the expense of the one thing that gives our landscapes their most distinctive, and certainly their not least charming feature.

The inmates of most of the homesteads were slumbering peacefully within, save and except one old gentleman, whom we found wandering through his domain, indulging in his pipe and meditations, and admiring a fine crop of peas which were just in blossom, and perfuming the air with their fragrance.

A party of English had arrived during our absence, so we hob-nobbed together, related our

experiences, and indulged in some mild dissipation, with the aid of Seltzer water and lemonade.

July 5th. For the first few miles out of Oien, the road was somewhat uninteresting. Our old friend the *Logen*, that we had never once lost sight of since leaving Lillehammer, had disappeared, and we no longer reaped the advantage of the cool breeze developed by its rushing waters. Seven miles further on, when we had again regained its grateful companionship, we passed the farm *Viig*, which is said to possess among its timbers part of the house in which *S. Olaf* was born. A less doubtful relic is the stone set up to mark the spot where nearly 300 years ago the Scotch Colonel Sinclair was buried.

His expedition is one of the few instances in which our history and that of Norway commingles in the long interval succeeding the Norman Conquest, and as it was an occasion on which for once in a way fortune frowned upon us, we have managed, and pretty successfully, to forget it.

Far otherwise with the Norwegians. The defeat and death of *Sinklar* (as they call him) is one of their most cherished traditions, and the most popular song in the language is *Storm*'s spirited ballad on it, that every *Gulbrandsdaler* knows by heart, and which in simple, yet stirring verse, recounts the setting forth of *Herr Sinklar* from fair Scotland, his march through Norway, and his surprise and

'death at the hands of the Gulbrandsdal farmers.
(*Appendix. Note I.*)

It may be asked *Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?* and we will therefore briefly relate the why and wherefore.

It was in the days of the great lion of the North, to quote Dulgald Dalgetty, Gustavus Adolphus, who, for a Protestant hero, had a happy knack of letting his co-religionists feel the weight of his arm equally with the Catholics.

He was at war with the Danes, who then ruled over Norway. Getting a little the worst of it, and Stockholm being threatened with siege, he sent over to Scotland to raise a body of troops who should make a diversion in his favour, by marching across Norway to the relief of his capital.

On its arrival, the Scottish force divided into two bodies, the one landing near Trondhjem, and eventually succeeding in their object, the other 900 strong (*Storm's* ballad makes them 1400) under Sinclair, taking the bold course of forcing their way through the Romsdal and Gulbrandsdal to Christiania.

After the terrible fashion of those days, they made a desert of the country they marched through, and young and old of each sex fell before their merciless swords. It was a bad as well as a cruel policy. The Norwegians were never greatly attached to their Danish masters, and had the

Scotch displayed a little more discretion they would in all probability have been allowed to pass freely. But the cry of anguish that their savage treatment wrung from the unhappy people resounded through the land ; the fiery-cross flew from valley to valley, and as the Scotch advanced confidently into the heart of the country, they were, little though they suspected it, rushing upon their fate.

“There rises a hill just under *Lide*,
Which men do *Kringelen* call ;
The *Logen*’s swift stream beneath doth glide,
In that our foemen shall fall.”

A band of 300 peasants prepared an ambush above the road along which their march lay, and huge quantities of rocks, stones, and trees were collected on the mountain, so placed that all could be at once hurled on their devoted heads. When they arrived beneath, the awful avalanche was at a given signal sent adrift, and the majority of the Scotch were crushed to death, or swept into the river and drowned. Sinclair’s wife is said to have accompanied him, and it is added, that a youth who meant to have joined the peasants in their attack, was prevented by a young lady to whom he was going to be married the next day. She, on hearing that one of her own sex was with the Scotch, sent her lover to her protection, when Mrs. Sinclair, mistaking his purpose, shot him dead.

“Laing,” from whom we have taken the above particulars as to the attack, adds that sixty prisoners were taken, and afterwards massacred in cold blood, but the ballad which was written on the spot barely a century after the occurrence, says nothing of any prisoners, and distinctly affirms that “not a living soul went home to tell the tale to their countrymen, and warn them of the danger of attacking those who dwell among the Norwegian hills.”

The stone that marks Sinclair’s grave was probably put up shortly after his burial, and is a rough unhewn slab of considerable size, having a cross rudely cut on it, and beneath it “*Her blev Skoternes anfører Georg Sinklar begravet, efter at han var falden ved Kringelen, den 26 August, 1612.* (Here was buried the Scottish leader, George Sinclair, after he had fallen at Kringelen.)

It is strange that he should have been buried so far away from the battle field, which lies twelve miles away ; but the fact is that the Norwegians were so delighted at having got rid of their enemy, and so proud of their victory, that quite a contest arose amongst them as to which parish should possess his body.

The peasantry about here relate that his remains were left unburied for several days, in order to gratify the curiosity of the inhabitants of the neighbouring valleys, who flocked in crowds to

gaze upon the face of him who, while living, had wrought such ruin upon them and theirs.

We dined at Storklevstad, on trout caught fourteen miles away in the *fjeld* lakes, pancakes, with slices of bacon fried in the batter, and the ever acceptable strawberries and cream. From here we posted to Bredevangen in a *stol kjørre*, and as no *skyds-gut* was forthcoming we drove off without one, with a parting injunction from the station-master to take care of the horse. It quickly discovered that its regular driver was absent, and crawled along at its own pace, and having soon after starting developed a tendency to shy, we did not care to use the whip, so that our progress was delightfully snail-like.

Luckily, a return *carriole* to the station we were bound for overtook us, and the boy, seeing our dilemma, offered to drive if one of us would get into the *carriole*. My juvenile friend, anxious to try his hand at steering a *carriole*, at once accepted the charge, and our new *Jehu* soon altered the aspect of affairs, and by constant and judicious whipping, made our sluggish beast move along in style.

He was an amusing little fellow, and talked away incessantly on every conceivable subject. Among other things *Johannes* confided to me that he didn't mean to be a *skyds-gut* all his days, but hoped in a few years to join his brother in the United States.

His face had far more of an Italian type about it than Norwegian, and with his long black hair and dark merry eyes he reminded me irresistibly of the juvenile Pifferari that come from *Napoli la bella* to discourse hideous music and shuffle through their uncouth dances.

He was a most adroit diplomatist, for before we had got half a mile he wheedled me out of a promise that he, *Johannes*, and none other, should drive us on to the next station. To soothe my *amour propre* he informed me that our horse was *meget slem* at *Kjöre* (very bad to drive), and expressed his opinion that my companion, whom he evidently took for my son, was a *pene gut* (pretty boy), the object of the compliment being anything but flattered on having it translated to him.

On arriving at the station, and ordering a *stol kjærre* to take us forward, a fresh *skyds-gut* mounted, but as our word was plighted, we persuaded him for a few skillings to cede his turn to our former charioteer, who was looking on ruefully in the back ground.* *Johannes* at once brightened up at seeing this move in his favour, and in the exuberance of his spirits drove us at such a break-neck pace, taking us again and again within a hair's breadth of the blocks of stone with which the road was lined in lieu of rails, that we were at length

* It is customary to give the *skyds-gut* four skillings per Norwegian mile as *drikke-penge* (literally, drink money).

compelled to check his wild career, and recommend a more moderate rate of progress.

We were now approaching the spot where Sinclair and his Scots met their fate. The road had for some time been running on the very edge of the *Logen* (only a few feet above its bed), which was here a wide swift stream of considerable depth. Above our heads the mountain rose abruptly, so that the road was almost over-hung by the huge masses of rock. The old road, now disused some ten years back, and in all probability that followed by Sinclair, was some 300 or 400 feet higher up the hill side, so that those of the Scots who escaped the first terrible avalanche, were instantly swept over the precipice into the river by the furious charge of the *Bönder*.

Across the river was a different scene. There the smiling, level valley stretched away for miles, its highly cultivated surface dotted with farm houses, and rich with waving crops, presenting doubtless the same picture as it did on the fatal 26th of August, 1612.

It is still told how to lull the Scots into greater security, and distract as much as possible their attention, one of the best musicians of the valley, a maiden named *Ragnhild* was placed on a neighbouring eminence, to lure them by the sweet strains of her horn (*Luur*) on to their destruction.

An ingenious plan was also adopted to make the peasants aware of the exact moment when the Scots should be immediately under their ambush. On the opposite side of the river, directly in a line with the vanguard of the invaders, rode a man on a white horse, who halted when they halted, moved on when they advanced, and enabled the peasants, without showing themselves, to know to a moment when the time to cut all adrift had arrived. A stone at the roadside marks the spot with the simple words—"In erindring om Bönderns tapperhed, 1612"—(In remembrance of the farmer's bravery).

In a hut hard by, with the indefatigable *Johannes* for cicerone, we were shown a rather doubtful collection of weapons, &c., said to be relics of the massacre—a few old matchlocks, a dagger, and the frame of a drum, with a pair of brass snuffers, ornamented with figures in bold relief, which roused our suspicions of the other "relics," as they were the exact fellow of a pair we had seen a day or two before at one of the stations.

Just before arriving at the station Moen, the road still being closely embraced by the river and mountain on either hand, a narrow lateral valley opened to the right, down which a torrent came thundering to dash itself into the *Logen*. It was rather a gorge than a valley, the stream forcing its way between huge walls of rock, and forming in

the few miles of its course some wonderfully fine falls, which quite repay the labour of getting at them.

A glimpse of the first and finest of them was visible from the bridge, but in order to approach nearer we climbed the steep sides of the hill overlooking it. Even then we were far from obtaining a clear and uninterrupted view of it, the rock through which it cleft its way encircling it on all sides, and hiding the greater part of the fall from view, save where it emerged from its prison, lashed into the most snow-white foam it is possible to imagine.

We had dismissed and paid *Johannes* before starting for our climb, and we soon saw him, rod in hand, trying to allure some of the trout at the foot of the fall, from the open window of a saw-mill overlooking the water, leaving his horse to graze contentedly at the road side.

We had had enough riding for a while, the jolting of the *stol kjaerre* soon telling its tale on the muscles of the back, and it was with a feeling of relief that we set off to walk to Laurgaard. The situation of Moen station was an exceptionally favoured one, nestling under the shadow of a church that raised its graceful spire heavenwards.

The valley here suddenly assumed a new form. From the narrow defile it had been gradually contracting to, it expanded out again to nearly two miles in width, the encircling mountains, though

somewhat too flat in outline to be picturesque, increasing rapidly in height, while the dark range ahead of us seemed to shut out all hope of egress.

The river about here became positively sluggish for a Norwegian stream, and as most of the land lay extremely low, and there is no "*Logen* Navigation Co." to keep the river within bounds, it overflowed the banks, converting the greater part of the valley into a dismal swamp, the only consolation of which, to the British sportsman, is that it is capital ground for wild duck shooting.

Just before reaching Laurgaard, we obtained a fine view of a valley leading to the *Vaage Vand*, peak upon peak stretching away in the dim distance, many of them hoary with the still unmelted winter snows.

The district surrounding the *Vaage* lake, although fertile and thickly inhabited, is not much visited by the English traveller, owing to its laying some distance from the main road, and being also, when arrived at, a species of *cul de sac*, unless the tourist will make up his mind for two or three days rough travelling over the *fjelds* on foot or horseback.

Nevertheless, its isolated position has more than once been of service to it. While Sinclair was ravaging the neighbouring Gulbrandsdal, its inhabitants in their retired valley escaped *Scot free*. A verse in *Storm's* ballad alludes rather contemptuously to their refusal to march to the aid of their

distressed countrymen, and even now, should there be any *Vaage* men present when the song is given, they are sure to be twitted with the inglorious figure their ancestors cut in the affair.

Laurgaard is most romantically situated at the entrance of the gorge of Rusten, one of the finest passes in Norway, and through which our route of the morrow lay.

On being shown to our sleeping quarters, we found they were constructed on the same principle as at Oien, one door to every two or three rooms, and the *pige* in answer to our enquiries, told us that the one within our own was to be occupied by a married couple, who were at that moment taking pot-luck in the *gjest* room below. Thinking the lady might have the usual British delicacy in marching through a gentleman's room, we explained to her how matters stood, and proposed that if it met her approval, we should change rooms when we would at once retire. She thanked us, but remarked in the frankest possible manner, that she had now got quite used to the custom, and didn't mind it a bit. "Only yesterday," said she, "two Norwegian gentlemen walked through our room as I lay awake in bed, and saluted me courteously with uplifted hat as they passed." We, of course, said no more.

Among the live stock was a numerous herd of goats, which had excited our admiration as they

grazed on the mountain side, by the picturesque attitude of the bearded veterans, standing balanced on some projecting crag, and the playful gambols of the kids. As evening drew on, they were collected and driven towards the station, in one of the outbuildings of which they were domiciled for the night. They are everywhere exceedingly tame, from being so much handled, and would often follow us for miles along the roads, in the hope of getting a bit of bread or salt, of which they are very fond.

July 6th. The scenery of the gorge of Rusten, is without a doubt among the grandest and most striking in Norway. The valley had abruptly dwindled to a mere chasm or rift in the mountains, just of sufficient width to give passage to the river, and no more. For the five miles the defile lasted, the *Logen* lost the character it had hitherto maintained, of a peaceable, well behaved stream, and dashed along in a series of rapids, whirlpools, and cascades, that were positively bewildering to gaze on and deafening to listen to. At intervals down the steep face of the mountain thundered a *Fos* from the snow *fjelds*, thousands of feet above, its waters looking dazzlingly white in the green frame-work of pine, through which it found its way to swell the torrent's roar.

Through all this, the road wound its tortuous way —a wonderful feat of engineering—now mounting

high above the river's bed, till the stream seemed a mere silver thread below, now running so close beside it, as to be almost watered by its spray. At times, it was blasted out of the solid rock, the grimness of which was relieved by a profusion of ferns and grasses, which sprouted out in luxurious masses from every crook and cranny. In parts of the gorge dense forests of pine clothed the precipitous sides of the mountain, and it was wonderful to see how little soil these hardy trees required to take root and flourish in. Even on bare walls of rock—on which a goat could scarce find a foothold—some favouring breeze had carried the germs of vegetation, and tiny trees, from the size of currant bushes, were struggling into existence.

About the middle of the pass, the road crossed the river to the western side, under the shadow of the towering *Haalangen* range. The view from the bridge up and down the gorge was one of unspeakable grandeur; the tumult of rushing waters seeming almost to shake the very foundations, and we breathed with a greater sense of security when once again on *terra firma*.

From Brændhaugen, a mile or two beyond the pass, we posted on to Toftemoen, the road as we approached the Dovrefjelds rapidly rising, so that we were soon nearly 2,000 feet above the sea level.

We paid a flying visit to Dovre Church, which stood close to the road side. The country churches in Norway are rarely near the villages, as with us,—indeed of villages, as we understand them, there are none, the farms being scattered wide apart over the valley in the midst of their generally diminutive holdings. In the thinly populated parts, the churches are few and far between, and it is not all unusual for many of the worshippers to come from distances of two, or even three Norsk miles; and thus the plan usually adopted, is to place them in as conspicuous positions as possible, to serve not only as aids in their spiritual capacities, but also to act as landmarks to the benighted wanderer,—like the beacons in olden times on the Lincolnshire churches.

The churchyard was entered by a covered gateway. Most of the graves had wooden crosses above them, with the inscription—"Fred med dit stov," (peace to thy ashes,) painted on them in white letters, and the age, name, and rank of the departed. The church itself had a very peculiar look, from its wooden framework being covered from roof to basement with huge slabs of a slatey stone, called in Norsk *fri-stene* (free-stone), obtained on the *fjelds*, and which splits off very easily. Some of the slates measured ten feet by six, but their dull colour gave the edifice a heavy dreary look.

We had a tired horse to Toftemoen, which hardly ever got beyond a walk till the post passed us, with a lively flourish of its horn, making our steed prick up its ears, and follow on at a greatly increased speed. The mail carts were three in number, and we learnt from the officer in charge, that they travel day and night, accomplishing the journey between Christiania and Trondhjem in three days, including one by rail and steamer.

At Toftemoen the Gulbrandsdal is looked upon as ending, and the passage of the *field* begins. The stationmaster here, whose name is *Tofte*, is said to trace his pedigree up to *Harald Harfager* (the fair haired), the first of the Norwegian kings who ruled over the entire country, and the thousandth anniversary of whose birth is to be kept as a national festival on the eighteenth of the present month.

We found this descendant of a line of kings harnessing a horse to a carriole for a passing traveller, and on completing his task, taking a seat on his own door step, which it required a stretch of imagination to view in the light of a throne. We approached most respectfully, and paid him some "carefully prepared" compliments on his kingly pedigree, which he was pleased to receive most graciously.

If we were to say that there was anything regal or 'imposing about his presence, we should be

indulging in a flight of fancy, for a more common place, unintelligent looking man it would be impossible to conceive. Another brother lives in a huge mountain farm on the hill side opposite, and so proud are they of their blue blood, and determined to preserve it in its integrity, that they have never for many generations past, married out of the family, the consequences of which have not failed to show themselves, in the stunted growth, and gradually weakening intellect, of nearly all the members of the family.

The house, although of wood, was most substantially built, and the furniture, with the rest of the belongings, gave evidence of the wealth and importance of the proprietor. In the *gjestrum* were several antique chests and wardrobes, elaborately carved and gilt in a rude but effective style, one of them bearing the date 1610, with the words "*Anno Cristi*". below it. There was also a wonderful looking clock of the same pattern ; and on the wall hung a genealogical tree, drawn by hand, in which the *Tofte* pedigree was not only traced back to *Harald Harfager*, but seemed to claim descent from *Thor* and *Odin*, or some such mythological and misty personages.

At dinner, there was a most extensive display of silver on the table, some of it a century or two old, and most artistically wrought. They tell the tale that some few years back, when the king of Norway

and Sweden (his title is always reversed in Norway) was on a royal progress to Trondhjem, he did *Tofte* the honor of dining with him, accompanied by his entire suite. When they were about to bring in the royal plate, *Tofte* proudly told the king that it was quite unnecessary, as he had silver enough to supply the whole table with.

We posted on from here to Dombaas, which is a sort of half-way house between Christiania and Trondhjem, and also the point where the road through the Romsdal to Molde and Christiansund strikes off from the main route.

Our ride was rather a tedious one, as it was now a continuous ascent, and the sandy nature of the ground helped to make the pace slower. The valley had entirely ceased, and the road was carried over the spurs of the mountains, which here formed a huge amphitheatre, that seemed to bar escape on every side.

Dombaas station was a large and important one, having in connection with it a telegraph and post office. Hung around the hall were a lot of fine skins for sale, of "wild critters" which had been shot in the neighbourhood—bears, lynxes, reindeer, and one specimen of a white fox, which is simply the *vulpes vulgaris* in its winter garb, but without that silkiness of texture which makes the skin of its arctic brother so much sought after. The lynxes, which are getting fewer and fewer each

year, have a lovely softness about theirs, almost equal to seal fur.

We spent the evening roaming over the hills, from one of which we obtained a fine panoramic view of the gloomy Dovrefjelds, up whose rugged sides our morrow's route lay. Unlike the magnificent roads over the Alpine passes, the numerous zig-zags of which give them the look of gigantic winding staircases, the one before us, disdaining all such adventitious aid, ran boldly upwards towards the mountain's crest, without so much as a curve to relieve the terrible steepness of the ascent.

One of the king's chamberlains, a *Kammerherr Gjerdrum*, was just starting when we got back to the station, and although the light four wheeled carriage he was travelling in had two extra horses put on, he told us it would take him two hours and a half to get to Fogstuen, only a Norwegian mile distant. As he was polite enough to add our knapsack to his load, we determined to eschew a wheeled conveyance, and ride up on horseback in the early morning.

CHAPTER V.

Over the Dovrefjelds.—The Lemmings.—Sneehatten.—Norwegian hotel bills.—A balloon voyage extraordinary.—Trondhjem.

WE were off at six, after swallowing a hasty crust and glass of milk to keep out the mountain mists, which hung in dense wreaths down its sides, but kept pace with our advance, and rose like a curtain on every side of us, the effect, as the distant peaks and ranges were uncovered and brought into view, being very fine. The only drawback was the pace, which was of the slowest, as the horses, regulating their movements entirely by the man who accompanied us to take them back, hardly ever got beyond a walk, except for the last few hundred yards before reaching Fogstuen, over which they rattled in fine style, having, like ourselves, the hope of breakfast before their eyes.

Our surroundings soon began to assume a wild dreary grandeur. All cultivation had long since ceased, patches of snow dotted the slopes above us, and off the well kept road we were traversing, the ground alternated between dwarf forest, sterile rocks, and swampy heath, the latter largely predominating. The lichens and mosses were very varied,

and we saw for the first time the celebrated reindeer moss, which all combined to give to the *fjeld* its indescribable tint, that has been humorously and correctly defined as “custard-mustard” colour.

Of animal life there was none, if we except an occasional lemming (*myodes lemmus*) out on a foraging expedition, which scuttled off at our approach, and when overtaken sat boldly up on its haunches, and vented its anger and surprise in shrill, pettish barks. They were droll little animals, not unlike tiny guinea pigs in size and shape, their color of a sandy tortoise shell, which in some specimens was very prettily varied.

Most of us who have any smattering of natural history, doubtless remember the wonderful tales told of the innumerable hordes that were said to emerge from some unknown region, and after devastating the country they passed through, finally brought their journey to a conclusion in the sea, into which each particular lemming was supposed to take a header, a form of “happy dispatch” the proprietors of the lands they had favoured with their presence must have viewed with unqualified approval.

Here they were far from being in such numbers as we had seen them on the *Fillefield*, where the mountain was positively alive with them, a fact owing to four years having elapsed since their

last invasion, and filled up the gaps in their ranks ready for another razzia.

We had to intercede with our guide for their lives more than once, for the Norwegians hate them like "pison," on account of the real or imaginary evil they are supposed to commit, and never let a chance escape of knocking them on the head.

On walking into the *gjest-rum* at Fogstuen, we found a gentleman of the genuine John Bull type at breakfast, whom we at first took for a countryman, and saluted him as such in the vernacular. The illusion was strengthened by his replying in English, which though not classical, we merely looked upon as one of the many *deialects* which abound north of the Tweed; but it turned out after all that he was a Norwegian, who had lived long enough in England to pick up not only the language, but a liking for our manners and customs. He was on a fishing excursion among the mountains, his rod, tackle, and other etceteras being all of English make, and his whole "get up" rather a laboured imitation of one of our own disciples of Izaak Walton.

The station, though but a poor one, boasts of great antiquity, being among a number of *fjeld stuen* (mountain lodgings) that were established so long ago as the twelfth century, in order to keep up the communication on the principal roads.

It was a long stage to Jerkin, close upon fourteen miles, and as our Anglo-Norwegian was going to fish at a bridge half way on, we determined to ride there with him, and walk the remaining distance,—a plan which would enable us to gain a good idea of the scenery of the plateau, which, in spite of its dreary monotony is not without its own peculiar interest.

Having dispatched breakfast, in the shape of eggs, milk, and white bread—the last a great luxury after the sour, black rye stuff, which no amount of apprenticeship could ever reconcile us to—we jolted off in our *stolkjærre*, with the fisherman on horseback behind. The mountain peaks on either hand of us, although belonging to the highest range in Norway, looked as it were cut short, at the height we were now above the sea level. We could not catch sight of Sneehatten, which was once considered the highest mountain in Norway, but has long since been deposed in favor of Galdhöpiggen on the Jotunfjeld, which, with its 8300 Norsk feet, is more than 700 feet higher than Sneehatten.

On our right, the shadows of the mountains almost overhung us, while to the left of our road there stretched away for miles a huge morass, (*myr* our friend called it, sounded exactly like the Scotch “muir,”) which was anything but a pleasant sight to gaze on, and would speedily have swallowed up any adventurous pedestrian striving to make his

way across it. Large tracts of it were covered by a low thick brushwood, with a few stunted trees scattered among it, rising up in the form of peninsulas, more often of islands, in the midst of the dismal swamp. Between them glistened thousands of tiny meres, which merged at length into two magnificent lakes, connected by a rushing stream, spanned by the bridge (*Aasaa Bro*) we had now arrived at.

From over the parapet we dropped our flies deftly on the water, when the rush of the stream carried them down at a great rate. It was too late in the day to expect much sport, but we soon bagged a brace of fine trout, together with two or three char (*hore*), which are a silvery graceful fish that grow to a large size in the mountain streams and lakes, but afford nothing like the play of their speckled relations.

Near us, a weather beaten octogenarian dweller on the *fjelds* was whipping the water with a ten foot fir pole for a rod, a line of rough hemp, and a bent pin for a hook, but he nevertheless, managed to bag several "whoppers," whilst our friend, with all the aid of his elaborate tackle, did not stir a fin the whole time we remained. The old gentleman was most anxious to become the possessor of an English hook, and on our presenting him with a couple he was most demonstrative in his gratitude.

It was fine fun to see him land his fish, for having no reel attached to wind them in with, the moment he felt one, he struck with all his might, the rod describing a complete half circle, and sending the fish some twenty yards behind him. His home was a miserable hut on the opposite shore of the lake, and on the same diminutive patch of pasturage was a *sæter* belonging to Toftemoen.

The plateau ceased just before reaching Jerkin, and the road was carried up an awfully steep ascent, midway up which was the station. The buildings were constructed in the form of a quadrangle, to keep out "the wintry winds," just sufficient space being left at the angles for carriages to drive in.

Jerkin, from its nearness to Sneehatten, and the facilities for shooting and fishing the neighbourhood affords, is a favorite place of sojourn for tourists, many of whom stop here for weeks together.

In spite of its isolated situation, it is said to be capital quarters, and we are able from our own experience to vouch for the excellence of its *cuisine*. The present family have for many centuries been in possession of Jerkin, and their wealth in cattle and horses is very considerable.

The father of the present proprietor was an amateur artist, of no mean skill, and specimens of his skill in oil painting and wood carving are visible in well nigh every room.

A party of the visitors were away scaling the heights of Sneehatten, which, though fatiguing, is practicable even for ladies, one, the Honble. Mrs. Hood, having accomplished the feat with her husband a few days ago. It can easily be done in a day, taking three or four hours to ride to the base of it, and nearly half that time to scramble through half melted snow to the summit, where, if the weather should be propitious, which seldom happens, a magnificent view of the whole of the *Dovrefjelds* is obtained.

During our halt, the clouds had been rapidly gathering in ever darkening masses, and it was plain that a heavy storm was about to break. Loth, though we were to face it, there was no help for it, every bed being occupied, and so donning our waterproofs, destined to receive a rude testing, we set off for Kingsvold, a Norsk mile below the head of the pass, and fortunately nearly all down hill.

A travelling carriage got under weigh just before us, with a freight of two natives, one a veritable Norwegian Daniel Lambert, with, as Hood says:—

“A back too broad to be conceived
By any narrow mind.”

It would, we imagine, be difficult to find any steeper ascent than that for the first few hundred yards out of Jerkin. It seemed impossible that any horses could come down in safety, much less that they could gallop down, as they invariably do. In the winter,

when the deep snow fills up the inequalities of the ground, it must be a delightful sensation, when the horses are unharnessed, and the sledges glide with the speed of an arrow down the incline. Our present rate of progress was in woful contrast; every few yards we had to halt for a supply of oxygen, and to add to our discomfiture the rain now came down in torrents. However, we struggled on bravely, and at last gained the highest point of the pass, 4594 feet above the sea. There we caught the carriage just preparing to rattle down the descent. The "stout gentleman" was in a terrible plight, from the exertion of walking up. We had watched his performance with—we are afraid—a feeling of malicious amusement. When we passed him, his fat sides were heaving like a mountain in labour, and as he entered the carriage and sank exhausted on its cushions, a deep sigh of relief expressed his gratification at the conclusion of his purgatory.

The storm soon came down with redoubled fury; the lightning flashes were incessant, and the roll of the thunder was repeated by a thousand echoes from every side. It was an awfully grand spectacle, though we should have appreciated it the more could we but have witnessed it from a place of shelter. We pushed on at a rapid pace, making no delays to admire the scenery, which indeed the dense cloud masses, above, beside, and below us,

effectually blotted out. After three or four miles the descent became less rapid, and the road, leaving the exposed mountain slope, entered a gorge which gave us some little protection against the driving rain. We found a more complete shelter under the wooden bridge of a torrent that crossed our path, and though a break in the clouds beguiled us with the hope that the storm had seen its worst, we ensconced ourselves beneath the arch, as the rain had already begun to penetrate our so-called waterproofs.

The Norwegian bridges are, as a rule, very neatly made, wood being generally the principal material, although at times roughly hewn stone, and more often boulders of native rock just as they come from the *fjeld*, are used for foundations. Wood, however, *par excellence*, is what Norwegian bridge builders rely on ; and they are to be found from the Naze to the North Cape, fashioned in every degree of finish, from a few rough logs thrown carelessly across a torrent, to the elaborate structure of several arches spanning the widest rivers.

The ordinary method of constructing those of a single span, is first to level on each side of the stream a platform on the rock. Solid pine trees are then laid close together, with their ends projecting some three feet over the water ; across the outer edge of these, other trees are placed cross-wise, then another layer parallel with the first, and so on

layer upon layer, each two projecting an equal distance over the last, until the space becomes sufficiently small to be easily spanned. Trees are then laid across, with rough planks for the flooring, and side rails put as the finishing touch to the structure.

A momentary lull occurring, we took advantage of it, and walked on to Kongsvold, which, as its name implies, is a relic of the ancient days when each petty king of Norway had a castle or "camp of refuge," to retire to in case of need. Our arrival had been heralded by our *avant courier* the fat gentleman, and we found a snug little room ready for us, where before a well spread table, and a cup of "the beverage which cheers," &c., —to use the shibboleth of our teetotal friends—we soon forgot our ducking. There was no hope of carrying out the wise old saw of "after supper walk a mile," as the rain was now again falling heavily, so, sending down our damp garments to be dried ready for the morning, we tumbled into bed, and were soon lulled to sleep by the twittering of a numerous colony of swallows, which had their nests under the eaves, within arm's length of us.

July 8th. "Waiting for the bill" would not be a bad subject for an artist. The scene might be laid, say in some Rhineland Hof, a Parisian Grand Hotel, or better still, in one of our monster London caravanseries. The success of the picture would

depend on the artist's rendering of the mingled expression of the victim, made up of a variety of unpleasant anticipations as to the length of the document about to be presented by the approaching waiter.

Whatever may be the deficiencies of Norwegian stations, the above drawback is at all events not one of them. If on the one hand we have fleecings innumerable at home and abroad to put to the debtor side of our account, we can on the other look back to our record of Norwegian bills with a satisfaction that goes far to soothe our wounded feelings. All the stations have, at the commencement of the *dag-bog*, a table of rates and charges for the different meals,—rates which are fixed by the authorities, and are reasonable enough to suit the lightest purse. Although the tariff thus regulates the maximum of the charges, and fixes a limit beyond which they shall not go, it says nothing about the other extreme, and very kindly allows them to charge as little as they like. It is strange, but no less true, that the station-masters, or rather mistresses,—for the women are absolute rulers in the house,—rarely avail themselves of the full power the tariff gives them, and many of the *regnings* (reckonings) presented, come as near to realizing that unknown quantity of next to nothing as may well be.

It was so in the present instance. We had

faref sumptuously—we had eaten and drank of the best they could give us—meat, eggs, fish, tea, coffee, and white bread had all disappeared down our ravenous maws, and for supper, beds, and breakfast, together with sundry other services rendered, in the shape of linen washed and clothes dried, we were amerced in the tremendous sum of one mark, and twelve skillings or just eight pence per head.

On looking through our notes, we find that this was the most moderate bill in all our Norwegian experience, although we have often been charged very little more for the same items.

Taking, however, a fair average, the following may be looked upon as the ordinary station charges on the principal roads, varying somewhat according to the moderation or otherwise of the respective proprietors. Supper, bed, and breakfast, two marks, and if coffee be taken at either of the meals, it is, especially in the Bergen district, charged as an extra. Dinner is nearly always one mark, and the price is the same, no matter how many dishes there may be. *Baiersk ol* is twelve skillings per quart bottle, while sherry, port, and claret, of which the last named is the only one to be depended on as genuine, are sold at well nigh every station, at from two and a half to three marks per bottle.

The wild war of the elements that had raged during the night ceased towards morning, the

clouds disappeared as if by magic, and were replaced by a burning sun, and a sky almost Italian in its intense blueness. The road to Drivstuen ran through a narrow gorge, which rarely ever widened out beyond a width of two or three hundred yards. The bed of the defile was taken up by the roaring torrent of the Driv, which foamed and tumbled down towards the valley in one unbroken succession of wondrous rapids and cascades. It was a delightful walk in the grateful shade cast by the overhanging walls of rock upon our path. The only traces of yesterday's storm were that the road was strewn with immense numbers of butterflies that had been put *hors de combat* by the rain fall, the rich hues of their wings looking on the grass like some new and rare flower.

We dined at Drivstuen, and had to undergo the while a polite, but most rigid inquisitorial visit from a determined looking landlady, who, when we sat down to table, coolly took a chair opposite us, and began to ply us with questions as to our nationality, age, name, condition in life, and so forth. Were we married? How many brothers and sisters had we? What were their names? Never was woman so curious, and when she had come to the end of her budget of enquiries, she still continued to stare at us with all her eyes, till we felt fairly disconcerted. To divert her attention we opened our knapsacks and presented her with a photograph or two of the

ruins of Paris, which we chanced to have amongst our effects, explaining them to her in our best Norsk, and had the satisfaction of seeing her regards transferred to the inanimate paper. The subject of them excited her interest and compassion, for the sympathies of all the Scandinavian races during the Franco-German war ran strongly in favour of the beaten nation. At times, they carried their feelings so far as to make demonstrations at Christiania, in front of the German Consul's house and those of the other Teutonic residents.

This was notably the case at the reception given to two young French aéronauts, who, in the winter of 1870, were in charge of one of the numerous balloons by which the postal service of besieged Paris was carried on. At the time of their ascent a strong sou'wester was raging, which carried the balloon before it with immense rapidity. All their efforts to descend were vain, and in an incredibly short space of time they found themselves above the North Sea, being hurried as they imagined to swift and certain destruction. Hours sped by, and still they were swept forward, literally on the wings of the wind. Once more they came in sight of land, but the sight brought them no consolation, for from its icy shores and snow covered peaks, they believed themselves to have arrived in the arctic regions, and that they were about to descend on the inhospitable shores of Greenland or Spitzbergen.

It was not an unnatural mistake, for the district of the Tellemark, where they again succeeded in reaching *terra firma*, is one of the wildest and most dreary districts of Norway, and might easily have deceived better judges than our two Parisians as to the latitude and longitude of the locality.

Although now landed, their troubles were by no means at an end. They were on the desolate mountain side, miles away from any habitation, and even when they succeeded in reaching the nearest hut, were unable to make their conditions known save by signs and pantomime. After some days, they got once more into civilized parts, and the news of their wonderful adventure having spread, they found themselves on arriving at Christiania the heroes of the hour. They were feted and lionised to their hearts content, while the unfortunate Germans were mobbed daily in their honor.

Eventually they went back to France with their mail bags, the contents of which thus duly arrived at their destinations, after a somewhat roundabout journey. We believe this to be the longest aerial journey yet on record, the distance, as the crow flies, being certainly not less than 1,000 miles, which is considerably longer than that accomplished by the veteran Green, in his flight from Vauxhall to Nassau.

The weather had now become so intensely hot that walking was out of the question, and as we

were but eight stages from Stören, where the railway to Trondhjem commences, we determined to post the remainder of the way, and defer our pedestrian exercise till the thermometer was something less than 90° in the shade.

We got over three stages during the afternoon and evening—Rise, Aune, and Stuen, thus doing about twenty-four miles, including stoppages, in five hours—rather slow progress—but the horses on this road are kept so continuously at work during the summer season, that except in the early morning it is almost impossible to obtain one fresh and able to cover the ground at a reasonable pace. Many a time at the Gulbrandsdal, in spite of their being professedly fast stations, we have had to wait oftentimes one or two hours till one of the horses returned, and it may be easily imagined how unfit (in spite of the half-hours rest allowed by law) it then was for another twenty miles spin.

The scenery passed through on our ride, was not very striking ; indeed, nearly the whole way from Drivstuen to Trondhjem the country has neither the smiling beauty of the Gulbrandsdal nor the rugged grandeur of the Dovrefjeld to recommend it, and we had no cause to regret our determination of hurrying over it as rapidly as Norwegian wheels could carry us.

Stuen, where we slept, was a new and fairly good station, strikingly situated in the midst of

dense pine forests, which now covered the country for miles. The mountains had receded into the distance, and the only relief to the universal green covering was the river winding its way like a streak of silver down the valley.

Just after our arrival, two young Englishmen came in with a landing net full of small trout, which they had taken in an hour or two in the stream below. They described the fish as being most ravenous, rising with a rush at the flies the instant they touched the water, so that they had often four on the hook at once. Some of the finest were soon broiling for a supper, to which they formed a capital addition. As the Norwegians almost invariably boil trout and salmon, unless otherwise ordered, it is as well to know that the word for broiled is *stegt* (pronounced steaked), and *kogt* for boiled. As a rule, they are far from being despicable cooks, and even in the country parts, it is rare to find among them instances of that gross ignorance of the first principles of the culinary art which has made the proverb, that "God sends the victuals and the Devil the cooks"—more applicable to England than any other country in the world.

July 9th. Off at eight a.m. for a hard and hot days posting, right away to Stören or Engen as it is indefinitely called. The distance was only five and a quarter Norsk miles, but it was past four p.m. ere

we drew up at the Railway Inn at Stören, although the roads were in excellent order, and down hill nearly the whole distance. We must deduct, however, an hours stoppage for dinner at Garlid, where they gave us roast (preserved) ptarmigan, with multeboer and cream to follow.

It was fortunate for us that our way lay for the most part through a succession of pine and birch forests, for the heat was something intense. Occasionally, through breaks in the trees, we got magnificent views of the valley which the road now ran far above. At one point, between Austbjerg and Bjerkager, it contracted to a narrow defile, the road almost overhanging the precipice, and a stone slab and cross marking the spot from which during its construction an unfortunate workman fell, and was dashed to pieces on the rocks below.

We had a somewhat exciting drive on to the next station. Our *skyds-gut* was an uncouth hobbedehoy, rather disposed to be impudent. Instead of mounting on the board behind, he seated himself immediately in front of us, in order the better as he said to drive. We did not at first object to this, as the slightest exertion was too great on such a day, but when pulling out a filthy looking *dhudeen*, he commenced puffing the smoke into our faces, we gently intimated to him that he had better retire to the rear. With a surly look,

he took the pipe from his mouth and put it into his pocket, with the tobacco still burning. It was at this point that we reached the most ticklish part of the road, and it was precisely here that our charioteer's temper getting the better of him, he commenced urging the horse to the top of its speed. It must be confessed that the spot chosen was hardly a favourable one for an equestrian display. To the right a wall of rock rose above our heads, while on the other side the precipice went sheer down, till the eye failed to pierce its gloomy depths ; and between us and destruction there was not even the frail barrier of a rail, but only a few blocks of stone set upon end, with space enough between them for a vehicle, double the size of our own to have passed. Down the inclines we dashed at a tremendous pace, the *stol-kjærre* flying from side to side, and every board in it threatening to dissolve partnership with the jolting. It was of no use trying to stop our "Jehu ;" we remonstrated with him, but to no purpose. He evidently saw we didn't like it, and whipped and shouted all the harder for the knowledge, till we were compelled to hold on like "grim death" to the sides of the cart, to avoid being spilt. We were heartily glad when the station was reached in safety, and we got a less reckless driver for the next stage.

At the station before Stören there was a dearth of *skyds-guts*, so my young companion proffered his

services, and mounting behind like a tiger, we drove in state up to the railway hotel, the well appointed look of which showed us that we were once again within the confines of civilization. In the yard outside there were a number of carriages with their drivers that had come in to catch the train (of which there are but two a day), and it gave us some trouble to find the boy belonging to the last station, who was to take back our trap and receive the money for its hire. It is a fact that shows the simplicity of the Norwegian character, and the reliance they place on the honesty of others, for we might easily have avoided payment, and gone our way without any one's being a bit the wiser.

The Trondhjem and Stören Jernbane, which is, we believe, the most northern railway in the world, has only a length of some thirty miles, with a single line of rails, and a narrow guage of not more than three feet. The original intention was to connect it by degrees with the Miösen lake, but during the last few years a new scheme has been adopted—to continue it in the direction of Röraas, the great mining centre, and then along the banks of the Glommen river to Christiania. It is to be constructed on Fell's principle, which has proved so successful over Mount Cenis and up the Rigi.

The station was a light graceful structure, built in the Swiss style, entirely of wood. In addition

to the ordinary carriages of the three classes, there were second class ones open at the sides, with all the compartments thrown into one. Seats were disposed in the centre and around, and in lieu of windows there were curtains to keep out the sun and rain, or which could be drawn at will to admit the refreshing breeze. Here we at once located ourselves, and as our train never exceeded the ordinary ten miles an hour pace, we had ample opportunities to admire the lovely scenery through which we passed.

The wild wooded character of our morning's drive had disappeared ; wide valleys, with waving crops and thriving homesteads, stretched away before us, while the mountains that bounded them were gradually losing their height and grandeur, and dwindling down as we approached Trondhjem into mere hills, which reminded us forcibly of the Isle of Man, and the country between Douglas and Peel.

The other occupants of the carriage were half-a-dozen English and a couple of Norwegian *studenter* on their way home for "the long" from Christiania University. They were disposed to fraternise, and we were soon chatting away together, but speedily found that their Trondhjem accent was not so easily understood as that of more southern Norway.

They did not pronounce their words with the same clearness as the Christiania folk, clipping

them of their fair proportions, and running them one into the other with, to us, a most puzzling effect.

Within a few miles of Trondhjem we got a glimpse of the Leerfossen—two fine falls to the right of the line, and in a few minutes we could see the city itself before us, steeped in the radiance of a glorious sunset. Beyond, to the north, south, and west, stretched the fiord—a sea of glowing molten gold, contrasting with the dark masses of the opposing mountains, behind which the sun was disappearing.

Trondhjem, which is built in the form of a half circle, lies at the mouth of the little river *Nid*, in a shallow bay of the fiord.

Although but the third in point of size, it is the most ancient of all the Norwegian towns, having been rebuilt in A.D. 997, by king Olaf Tryggvesen on the site of Nidaros, the origin of which is lost in the twilight of fable. Its modern look, however, gives little sign of its antiquity. With a few rare exceptions, every building is of wood; and as the city has been burnt down on an average every fifty years, but few of its former glories remain to it, beyond a church or two, and a tower of the ancient Benedictine cloister on Munkholm (Monk's Island), which lies some little way out in the harbour.

The streets, which are of great width, are laid out at right angles, and they have two drawbacks,

which speedily force themselves into notice—the pavements and the drains. The first is just as we see it in the Hogarthian drawings of London streets more than a century ago—the roadway laid with square blocks of free stone, while the sidewalks for pedestrians are covered with nasty, sharp pointed pebbles, for all the world like petrified potatoes.

The drains are simply open sewers, green, stagnant, and odoriferous, poisoning the air with their miasma, and depending solely on the showers—which are fortunately numerous—to flush them, and sweep their foul contents to the sea.

We noted these little peculiarities on our way to the hotel "Victoria," whither the students politely insisted on conducting us. They left us at the door, sweeping off their hats to us with an almost oriental salaam.

Doffing the hat is the universal salute in Norway, and as it is a custom with most English visitors "more honored in the breach than the observance," it may be as well to state, that to omit it is looked upon as a grave breach of manners. It often amused us to witness the ceremonious way, even in the country parts, in which the peasants would salute each other when they met. In the towns, it is the custom on entering a shop, not only to take off the hat, but also to remain uncovered the whole time of remaining there.

CHAPTER VI.

Trondhjem Cathedral.—Conversion of Norway to Christianity.—Legends of *St. Olaf*.—Falls of the Leerfossen.—A Dishonest Peasant.—Coasting Steamers.—Christiansund.—Molde.—The Romsdal.—Aak.

JULY 10th. We breakfasted in the morning *en famille*, the majority of the hotels here being in the boarding house style, with fixed hours for meals. *Middags-mad* (dinner) is at the good old-fashioned hour of half-past one, and *aftens-mad* (evening meal), which is a sort of compromise between tea and supper, at eight p.m.

We found it a pleasant, sociable plan, and far preferable to eating in solitary state. The landlord, *Herr Quillefeldt*, a German, took the head of the table, with his Norwegian wife at the other end, and they both exerted themselves to the utmost in attending to their guests.

We had hoped to have caught a coasting steamer to Molde on the morrow after our arrival, but found there would not be one until Saturday, so that we were in for a four days stay, which we hailed, however, as a welcome rest, after the fatigue of our tramp.

Our first morning, then, we devoted to the lions of Trondhjem—we ought rather to have said lion—

for the sole object of architectural or antiquarian interest is the Cathedral, which even in its ruined and mutilated condition, bears ample testimony to the beauties, which, in the days of its glory, made the shrine of *St. Olaf* the boast of Scandinavia, and the attraction for numberless crowds from every land in Christendom. Its history is almost coeval with the establishment of Christianity in Norway, of which we will give a brief sketch.

Nearly three centuries had elapsed since the conversion of our own land by St. Augustine, ere the knowledge of the true faith was preached to the Norwegians. Until the latter part of the ninth century, Norway was under the sway of numberless petty princes, and was only known to the more civilized and Christian nations of Europe as the home of those terrible hordes of Vikings, who annually ravaged their lands with fire and sword.

It was not that missionaries were wanting who would gladly have given their lives, like St. Boniface in Germany, to bring them under the softening influence of the religion of love, but in truth, the Norsemen were for the time being a nomade race, never in the same spot for long together, but incessantly on the move, in whatever direction promised the best chance of plunder.

It was a glorious privilege reserved for the descendants of *Harald Harfager*, who, about the year 872, had succeeded in becoming absolute

monarch of all Norway. He himself lived and died in his heathenism, but his youngest son Hacon, surnamed "the good," who had been brought up at the court of our Anglo-Saxon King Athelstan, strove, on his accession to the throne, to do all in his power to introduce Christianity.

He began cautiously, converted by degrees some of his courtiers, raised a few Churches in the district around Trondhjem, and brought over from England a bishop and priests. He then summoned, a *Thing* or parliament, at which he proposed to the assembled *Bönder*, "that all the people should be "baptised, believe in one God, and Christ the son of "Mary, abstain from all heathen sacrifices, keep holy "the seventh day, and refrain from all work thereon." The proposal was premature, and was rejected by the assembly with indignation.

The popular suspicions were now thoroughly aroused, the churches were burnt down, the priests put to death, and Hacon far from being able to carry out his designs, was compelled, to appear at least, to offer sacrifice to Odin in order to save his crown.

In 995, thirty years after his death, *Olag Tryggvesen* was unanimously chosen king. His early life had been one of wild adventure, as one of the most daring and renowned of all the Vikings of his day. He is said to have visited well nigh every country in Europe, and while in our own land, was

converted to Christianity, and confirmed in the presence of king Ethelred and his court. Like Hacon, he resolved on the extermination of heathenism, and being a man of iron will and immense fertility of resource, he succeeded in making nominal Christians of a good number of his subjects.

We say nominal, for it must be acknowledged the means he employed were more likely to produce a conformity more apparent than real.

His plan of conversion was simplicity itself. A host in himself, and with a chosen band of warriors at his back, he made a royal progress through the country, summoning Things to meet him, and giving to the assembled Bônder the choice of two conditions—either to accept Christianity, or fight. It may be easily imagined that at his death in the great sea-fight of Svolder, the majority of his converts lapsed into their former heathenism ; and when in 1015, Olaf Haraldson—better known as the Saint—came to the throne, he found that the work of evangelization had to be commenced afresh.

The life and character of S. Olaf are points upon which great controversy have arisen. On the one hand, he is looked upon as a holy man, of pure life and morals, who availed himself of his kingly power to stamp out the idol worship of his countrymen, and introduce (it may be with somewhat of a high hand) the Christian faith.

On the other hand, it is asserted that he was a wild and and ferocious conqueror, whose zeal for the propagation of religion was only a cloak for his lust of conquest, and that, to quote a recent writer "under the sacred banner of the cross he "perpetrated the most ruthless deeds of blood and "plunder, until his atrocities raised the whole "country against him."*

By far the greater number of those who have thus defamed him, are Norwegian writers of the post-Reformation period, who, to show their allegiance to their new faith, have delighted in heaping derision and contempt on all that their forefathers held most dear. The ancient "Sagas," or contemporary records, which of late years have become more known out of Norway, present Olaf to us in a very different light, so that the study of them has led Maclear, in his *Apostles of Mediæval Europe*, to speak of him in the following terms:— "The example which he set to his subjects was "more satisfactory than that of either of his prede- "cessors. He was exemplary in observing the "ordinances of religion. The impartial severity with "which he administered the laws, punishing equally "both great and small, was one of the chief causes "of rebellion against his rule. S. Olaf was "eventually compelled to fly the kingdom, but

* Murray's "Guide to Norway."

"was re-called three years later by the party
"favorable to his interests. He had no sooner
"appeared, than multitudes flocked to his standard,
"but he rejected all who did not comply with the
"one condition of service, — the reception of
"baptism. The helmets and shields of all who
"fought on his side were distinguished by a white
"cross; and on the eve of the combat, Olaf directed
"many marks of silver to be given for the souls
"of his enemies who should fall in the battle,
"esteeming the salvation of his own men already
"secured. He also directed that the war shout
"should be 'Forward, Christ's men! Crossmen!
"King's men!' The battle was hot and bloody, and
"Olaf was defeated and slain."

The seed already sown had, however, taken too deep a root to be eradicated, and Christianity shortly after his death became firmly established in Norway. The body of S. Olaf was after the battle hidden by some of his adherents, and three years later, on the reports of the miracles that were taking place through his intercession, it was dug up, and found to be perfectly incorrupt. For the next sixty years it underwent many vicissitudes, being moved from church to church, as each succeeding monarch surpassed his predecessor in the magnificence of the shrine he erected to receive it.

Olaf Kyrre, who died in 1093, divided Norway into Bishoprics, and it was during his reign that

the foundations of the first Cathedral were raised, S. Olaf's body being—on its completion—placed under the high altar. Few traces of the building now remain, but there is no doubt that it formed the ground plan and had an important influence on the design of the present Cathedral.

It was not until the close of the thirteenth century, that—the grand west front being finally completed—the whole structure stood forth in all its beauty, when it was not only the largest in the three Scandinavian kingdoms, but was not unworthy, from the richness of its architectural details, to challenge comparison with many of our English Cathedrals. Its extreme length was at that time 346 feet, with a breadth of 84; while the west front, which was richly decorated, with a chapel at each corner, had a width of 140 feet. In addition to the numerous flying buttresses and pinnacles, there rose five towers, each surmounted by a spire, the grand central one rising to a height of 250 feet.

Its present condition offers a lamentable contrast to its appearance in the days of its glory. A series of destructive fires in 1328, 1432, and finally in 1531, swept away the west end, and robbed the central tower of half its altitude, and the Reformation which followed, being more favourable to the destruction than to the restoration of God's-house, prevented any attempt being made to save the greater part of it from sinking into complete and

utter ruin ; and the only portions that, from the sixteenth century to our own day, have made available for service, are the transepts, choir, and present chapter house, or ancient sacristy.

During the last fifty years, there have been some few attempts at restoration, in which considerable sums have been expended, but a master hand has been evidently wanting to direct the efforts, and the principal result achieved, has been to perpetrate some awful Vandalsms, such as blocking up the choir with a mass of hideous brick-work, and cloaking up the most elaborate tracery with coats of a lead colored wash, which makes one shudder to look at.

At present, better days seem to be dawning for it, the direction of the work having recently been placed under a young and rising architect,—Herr Christie, of Christiania, a descendant of a Scotch family, who, if we may judge from what has already been accomplished under his supervision, is the right man in the right place.

The Cathedral is open each week day from twelve to one, and at the former hour we joined a group that were just about being conducted through it, by a *cicerone* appointed for the purpose, a polite, well informed young man, who translated his remarks as he went on, for the benefit of the few English present. Our tour of inspection lasted upwards of an hour. and though there was

much to interest us, it was impossible to avoid a feeling of pain at the terrible wreck it presented of its former beauty, and this not so much from the ravages of the elements, as from the mis-directed zeal of incompetent renovators.

Norman work predominates throughout, especially in the transepts, the north one presenting the unusual feature of having round and pointed arches side by side with each other, a fact which most writers on the subject have looked upon as upsetting the theory of attributing these two styles of arch to different periods of Gothic.

It must, however, be borne in mind that this part of the Church was not began until the date (1160) of the transition period between Norman and early English, and "it seems clear," says Parker, (commenting on Rickman's statement to the same effect,) "that the pointed arch was in "common use in England and in other parts of "Europe, by the middle of the twelfth century, "being used indiscriminately, as was most consonant "with the necessities of the work, or the builder's "ideas."

The gem of the whole building is undoubtedly the choir, which, full of the richest detail throughout, reaches its climax in the *højkoret* (high choir), which surrounds the high altar, beneath which the body of S. Olaf reposed, in a network of slender pillars and open arches, extending to the roof. It

is a marvel of lightness and grace, and when restored will be one of the most charming specimens of the decorated style that Europe can show.

Many of the side chapels—although much dilapidated, their groined roofs being in several instances braced up by unsightly iron bands—are yet full of first class work, in every style but the perpendicular. The restoration of one has just been completed, the funds for it having been left many years ago by a worthy citizen, after whom it has been named.

In olden days, the great attraction was S. Olaf's shrine, which was decorated with the greatest magnificence.

The body was enclosed in three coffins, the inner one of silver, with a weight of 6500 *lods* (half an ounce to the lod), enclosed in two wooden ones, the outer of which was set with gold and silver ornaments, and numberless precious stones. According to Malte Brun it brought hither, not only pilgrims from Scandinavia, but from all parts of Europe, while such was the veneration in which the saint was held, that churches were erected under his patronage even in Constantinople. The body of S. Olaf was found incorrupt in 1098, and again in 1541, when the Lutherans, following the example of that amiable and virtuous monarch Henry VIII. (see Froude's history), plundered the shrine of all its treasures; but it is satisfactory to know that

the ship which carried the greater part of the plunder foundered at sea on its way to Denmark, and the rest was seized by knights of the road on its overland journey.

The Lutherans appear to have treated the body of the saint with some sort of respect, leaving it in the plainest of its three coffins, in which it was shortly afterwards captured by the Swedes, and carried into their own country. It was restored by them in 1568, and buried in the Cathedral, but the particular spot has up to this day remained a secret.*

Many are the curious legends still extant, of the combats which S. Olaf had to wage in introducing Christianity, not only with the recalcitrant Bönder, but also with agents of darkness, in the shape of wizards (*trolds*). These gentry very naturally resented the introduction of a system so diametrically opposed to them. Their machinations were, however, of no avail ; the king's sanctity rendered him invulnerable to their attacks, and wherever he met them he made the sign of the cross over them, and turned them into stones, many of which are to this day pointed out in different parts.

One legend recounts how S. Olaf, by the promise of a great reward, persuaded a good natured wizard

* On the south side of the choir is a staircase leading to what is called S. Olaf's well, the legend being that his body was first interred there, and that on its removal a spring of water gushed forth.

to build for him the spire of Trondhjem Cathedral, and it must be owned that for so holy a man S. Olaf treated the poor wizard rather scurvily, after he had faithfully performed his share of the contract. As it may be new to our readers we give a translation of it :—

“Trondhjem Cathedral is known far and wide as one of Christendom’s most remarkable churches, but still more striking was it in the olden time, with its graceful spire towering to the sky. S. Olaf found it easy enough to build the church, but the spire was beyond his skill. In his perplexity he promised the sun to whoever would accomplish the task of raising it. When no one else came forward, a wizard who lived in a neighbouring village offered to do it for the stipulated reward, affixing the condition that S. Olaf must never address him by his name, even should he chance to discover it.

“As the spire rose rapidly towards completion, S. Olaf was soon in a fix as to the payment, and tried his utmost to get upon the track of the wizard’s name. Sailing about midnight along the coast he came to a place called Kjørringen, where he heard a child crying in a field, when the mother to pacify it promised it the sun when its father Twester came home.

“Joyfully Olaf hurried back to the town, and came in the nick of time, for the spire was just completed, and the wizard was on the

point of putting the last gilded knob on the weathercock.

"Thou art setting the weathercock too far to the west Tvester, shouted S. Olaf. The moment the wizard heard his name, he fell down dead."

In the Norwegian constitution of 1814, it was definitively laid down that Trondhjem Cathedral should be the place for the coronation of the sovereign, and it was here that Charles John the First, alias Bernadotte, the ex-Marshal of France, received the fealty of his new subjects.

Formerly the ceremony was not confined exclusively to this cathedral, only four kings having received their crowns under its roof, viz. :— Haakon V., 1299 ; Karl Knutsson, 1449 ; Kristian I., 1450 ; and John in 1483.

On the high altar is a fine cast of Thorwaldsen's noble statue of our Saviour, from the original in the Church of our Lady in Copenhagen, and inferior casts of those of the twelve Apostles used also to stand round the high choir, but are now removed.

Our tour of inspection over, we were invited to inscribe our names, in a book, with the privilege of adding at the same time, our contributions in aid of the restoration fund. No charge is made for admission, but nearly all dropped their mite into the box, and photographs of the Cathedral were also on sale at very reasonable prices.

We spent the afternoon in improving our acquaintance with the town, strolling through its broad but somewhat monotonous streets, peeping into the shop windows, the contents of which, would not have been peculiar in any English town, and finally, in having our "fotografs"—as the Norwegians phonetically call them—taken by a one legged Pole, whom the last insurrection against Russia had left minus a limb.

It must be confessed that Trondhjem is not a lively place. Like most country towns of 1,500 inhabitants, it takes life in a very hum-drum fashion, and as the Norwegians are at no time a very demonstrative race, the amount of noise and bustle in its grass grown thoroughfares is infinitesimal. Even the boys partake of the universal depression, and unlike the British variety of the species, carry on their games in the most orderly manner. The only sign of life is down towards the harbour, where a good number of small fishing and merchant ships are generally at anchor, the crews of which gave a little movement to the quays, as they unload or take in their cargoes.

The warehouses in which goods are stored are almost the only ancient wooden buildings the numerous fires have spared. Rising to the height of four or five stories, built of huge massive logs, black with age, and dating from the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries, they are not devoid of the picturesque, as they stand contrasting in their grimness with the gaily painted houses that surround them.

In the Market-place were two or three covered booths for the sale of books and fancy articles, a very subdued looking crowd fluctuating around them. There were also a few country women with vegetables and poultry, their wares displayed on the ground in default of stalls.

Trade was evidently languishing, the only thing enquired for being *ost* (cheese), for which there was a brisk demand, the tasting process being accomplished in the most primitive fashion, by the vendor thrusting his forefinger into the soft mass, and handing it to the purchaser.

We cannot compliment the Norwegians on the excellence of their cheese, which, as a rule, is poor tasteless stuff. The *ny ost* (new cheese), that forms the bulk of the produce is not unlike *Gruyère* in appearance, but with a wide difference in flavor, of which it would be almost true to say that it has none, save a slight sensation of curds. There is nothing positively distasteful about it, which is more than can be said for its elder brother *gammel ost* (old cheese), which is often strong enough to knock one down with its smell, and is, as may easily be imagined, quite an acquired taste, that few but natives can ever hope to possess. There is also

a third sort called *mys ost* (goat's cheese), which is of a yellowish brown color, and has an indescribable sweet mawkish taste.

In the evening, one of our student friends supped with us, and afterwards acted as our guide round the environs, which, in the immediate neighbourhood of the city are very flat, although the hills begin to rise a mile or two away.

We met in our ramble with one or two watchmen (*vægter*) patrolling the streets, but their office in such a law abiding community (where shutters and locks are at so complete a discount) must be a sinecure indeed. They are armed with a long staff, surmounted by a knob, studded with sharp spikes, called the (*morgen stjerne*) morning star. The late Marquis of Waterford, of knocker-wrenching renown, in one of his midnight expeditions through the streets of Bergen, was nearly killed by a tap on the head from one of them.

Another, and not the least important of the watchmen's duties, is to give warning of the outbreak of fires, for which purpose a look-out is always kept from the watch tower, whence as each hour comes round, they chant in lugubrious rhymes the time, and state of the weather, interwoven with an exhortation to prayer. There is no doubt that this custom dates from a very early period ; we append a verse of one, with its literal translation.

Ho, vægter, i ho ! Ho, the watchman, ho !
Klokken er slagen ti The clock has struck ten,
Lovet være Gud vor Herre! Praised be God our Lord !
Nu er det paa tider Now has the time come,
Man lægger sig til sengs, In bed to lay us down,
Madmoren med sin pige, The housewife & her maid,
Hosbonden med sin dreng. The master and his lad.
Vinden er S. E., The wind is south east,
Hallelujah ! lovet være Hallelujah ! praised be
Gud vor Herre. God our Lord.

July 11th. We spent the morning in an excursion to the Leerfossen, which are formed by the river *Nid*, some three miles out of the city. To get to them we took train to Sluppen, a station about a mile from the falls, but as the path is somewhat difficult to find, by far the best way is to follow the main road from Trondhjem, which can be varied at will on returning, and makes a very pretty ramble.

We took what was described to us as a short cut over the hills, and eventually by dint of enquiring again and again at the numerous cottages, arrived after heading for every point in the compass at the lower fall. Unlike most of the Norwegian fosses, which unite great height with but a narrow stream of water, the Leerfoss has a breadth of 120 feet with a height of perhaps 80. The river at one bound abruptly throws itself over a perpendicular wall of rock, but it lacks that broken and

picturesque outline which is the principal charm of a fall, having in lieu of it almost the artificial look of a theatrical cascade, so trim are the surrounding rocks, and smoothly regular the downpour of the rushing waters.

Half a mile higher up the stream there is a larger fall, which is said to be finer than the lower, but our time was limited, the day hot, and after a week in Norway one gets a glut of falls, and it soon requires something very special to draw one out of the beaten track.

Close to the right bank of the river, and turning the tremendous water power to practical purpose, were several saw mills and copper smelting furnaces, which, however useful, were anything but ornamental adjuncts to the surroundings. We visited one of the latter—a manufactory of sub-oxide of copper, of which there are but one or two others in the country. The foreman showed us all over it, and politely explained the whole process, which was extremely interesting, although unfortunately, from the technical terms he employed, we failed to catch a great deal of his meaning.

The ore, which comes from Röraas, a hundred miles distant, and is brought hither by carts and rail, is first crushed to powder in the water mill. It is then placed in huge iron cauldrons and cooked for several days, the refuse that rises to the surface being continually skimmed off. When thoroughly

purified, it is run into tanks of boiling water, in which it is allowed gradually to cool down. As the temperature begins to lower, a number of sticks are suspended in the water, on which the copper speedily collects, covering them with a mass of bright red crystals, which are withdrawn at the end of the fortnight, perfectly cool and brittle. They are then detached from the sticks, spread out in trays to dry, and afterwards packed in barrels for home use and exportation. They told us that the greater part of what they make here goes to Hamburg, where, we believe it is used in the coloring of stained glass, imparting to it a rich ruby tint.

Before leaving, we were presented with some fine specimens of the crystals, by the workmen, who in return for the modest *drikke-penge* we presented them, shouted after us *lykkelig reise* (happy journey), the usual Norwegian farewell as we retraced our steps homewards.

In the afternoon we went over the *Videnskab Selskab* (Useful Knowledge Society), which comprises a library of 30,000 volumes, principally theological, and with some important manuscripts bearing upon the early history of the country. On the ground floor there is a small but interesting museum, and, although not one of the "open" days, we were at once admitted by the officials on learning our nationality.

This courtesy, which we do not quite understand what we have done to merit, is always shown throughout Scandinavia to our countrymen. The mere fact of being an Englishman is an effectual *open sesame*, not only to the public buildings, but also to the private home circles of every class of the community, who require no other credential, and are never better pleased than when they can extend kindness or hospitality to their *quondam* enemies.

The collection of weapons comprised a variety of armour, shields, spears, and two-handed swords, that used to form the ordinary equipment of a Viking when on the "war path." We were rather amused when our conductor gravely presented for our admiration, what he called an ancient Greek helmet, the metal of which was dazzling in its brilliancy, and in a state of the most wonderful preservation. We restrained our smiles by an effort, and gently insinuated that it would be more appropriately housed in the property room of the Trondhjem theatre, than in its present proud position as the gem of the collection.

Some of the contributions of ecclesiastical ornaments from churches that have gradually fallen into ruin, are remarkable for the grotesqueness of the carving, the Runic or interlaced wickerwork pattern being predominant, such as is often seen on the Norman doorways of our English churches.

Not a few of the roughly painted *tryptychs*, with the crucifixion in the middle panel, and figures of the saints at the sides, came from Iceland, which in the 11th and 12th centuries was a centre of learning, and its inhabitants far superior in culture and civilization to the rest of Europe, a fact owing to its poverty and secluded situation saving it from invasion and intestine divisions.

In the evening we did some fishing out in the harbour, but caught nothing but a few flounders and codlings. The seafaring population here are uncommonly rough diamonds, and ask as a rule about thrice the legitimate fare for their boats. We had been warned, however, of this little peculiarity, and kept shaking our heads till they had come down nearly to the price we intended to give.

Just as we were on the point of striking a bargain, a boat rowed up from an Allan Line steamer in the bay, and two gentlemen landed, one the agent of the company, a recently made acquaintance of ours, with the commander of the steamer, a rough Danish sea-dog—the beau ideal of a hardy rover of the seas—who would have made a splendid Viking had he lived a thousand years ago.

“Full of strange oaths, and bearded like a pard,” was the captain, speaking our language fluently, but as our quotation suggests, with a *naughty-cat* flavour about it, which we must charitably suppose

was owing to the conditions under which he had acquired it.

Seeing the errand we were on, and also the difficulty we had in arranging the preliminaries, the captain good-naturedly dashed into the fray, and assailed the crowd of boatmen with a torrent of Norsk, utterly incomprehensible to us, but which we could see the effect of, in the scowling and disappointed looks of the boatmen balked of their prey.

“—— them,” said the captain, turning to us, warm yet victorious, “they’re the ——est lot of cheating vagabonds in the —— town.” “Come here, you beggars,” he shouted to two pleasant faced boys, who had been looking on from a distance at the skirmish. “These are the only decent fellows in the place,” he remarked parenthetically to us, as he helped us into their boat, “you may trust them without being swindled, but those —— scoundrels,”—and we could hear, as we pushed away from the pier, the captain’s vocabulary of forcible, but untranslatable epithets being freely scattered on the sins, real or imaginary, of the Trondhjem boatmen.

At supper we sat next to Herr Christie, the architect for the restoration of the Cathedral, and had a very pleasant chat on architecture in general. He gave us photographs of some of the more peculiar details of the Cathedral, and told us that the estimated cost of the entire restoration

was 550,000 dollars, or over £120,000; so that at the present rate of progress he hardly hoped to see its completion, as funds come in but very slowly. The Government yearly grant is only two or three thousand pounds, while the efforts of private individuals, in so poor and thinly populated a country as Norway, can do but little to make up the deficiency.

July 12. We devoted another morning to the Cathedral, and meeting with Herr Christie soon after our entrance, he kindly conducted us all over it, and gave us most full and interesting particulars of its past and present, and what it is intended to make it in the future.

They have now commenced to restore the "high choir," and scaffolding has been for this purpose erected all round the inside in a series of stages, so that we were able to get a close view of the delicate and beautiful tracery of which it is composed, and in which in the more sheltered parts is as perfect as on the day it was first carved. Just above the rood screen are three projecting pedestals, from which in mediæval times the Archbishop of Trondhjem, supported by his suffragan bishops on either hand, used to read out the papal interdicts under which Norway was not unseldom laid.

The stone principally used in the interior is a soft greyish blue one, which is very easily worked, and hardens on exposure to the air.

The most complete wreck of all are the nave and west front, the walls of which alone remain, being only kept from falling by huge brick buttresses at frequent intervals. The west front in its uninjured state must have been very striking, the entire facade being taken up with niches filled with figures of saints, which even mutilated and defaced as they now are, present traces of no uncommon beauty.

In the afternoon our Irish friend, Mr. E——, of the Allan Line, drove us out to his house, delightfully situated on a headland over-looking the fiord, about a mile from Trondhjem. On our way we made a detour through a country almost English in its landscape, so fertile and highly cultivated was it ; indeed, from the earliest times, the district around Trondhjem has been looked upon as the garden of Norway, having in spite of its northern position, a temperature considerably lower than that of Christiania and other southern Norwegian towns, a fact owing to the gulf stream keeping the whole west coast of Norway in a perpetual state of "hot water."

Our host's house stood in the midst of its own garden plot, which was rather better cared for and laid out than is generally the case in Norway, where from the causes of climate and ignorance of horticulture, the art of gardening is at a somewhat low ebb. It was not, indeed, till the 11th or 12th

centuries that any attempts were made at the cultivation of the soil, save for the simplest purposes of agriculture, the early Norwegians almost imitating in their diet the ancient Germans and our own British ancestors, whom Cæsar describes as sowing but little corn, and depending for their subsistence on their flocks and herds.

The first to introduce fruits, vegetables, and flowers, were the monks, who surrounded each cloister with its patch of garden ground, where the products of southern Europe were gradually acclimatized. To such a pitch of perfection did they attain, that according to Norwegian writers, it is by no means certain that their countrymen are even now superior in this respect, and the best and most productive gardens are still to be found on the sites of the old monasteries throughout the land.

Mr. E——'s next door neighbour had a very extensive garden, in which we were astonished to find quite a thriving cherry orchard, the trees fairly laden with fruit, which although so early in the season for so high a latitude, were already ripe. The principal sorts were the Bigaroon and White-hearts, equal both in size and flavour to our English ones.

The grounds ran along the very edge of the cliffs overhanging the sea, and the owner, who seemed to have quite a natural taste in landscape gardening,

had made the most of the romantic situation. Thick clumps of nut trees and leafy shrubs, formed a hedge that served both as a safeguard and protection against the sea breeze. Here and there the paths which wound through their sylvan recesses suddenly emerged on to a projecting point of rock, whence a varied panorama of the fiord and distant towers of the city were flashed before the eye at a glance. On other points of vantage were perched rustic summer houses for the *al fresco* entertainments which the Norwegians, during their short summer, so much delight in. The garden gradually merged into the neighbouring mountain, its summit clothed with a canopy of silver birch, with many a fragrant bed of strawberries and raspberries, and an infinity of ferns and wild flowers nestling under their shade.

Mr. E——, who had lived some three years in Trondhjem, gave us some interesting particulars of the characteristics of the people. The Trondhjemers are as a rule very lively and hospitable, and the higher classes more educated and refined than in the other parts of Norway.

Of the lower orders, the picture he drew was not so favourable. Drink is the great evil, and as the native corn brandy is unfortunately as cheap as it is bad, a man can, for half-a-dozen skillings, get as "drunk as a lord." In addition to this little weakness, they are very treacherous, and despite a

surface politeness, ready to take advantage of a stranger.

During the first year of Mr. E. ——'s residence, more than one attempt was made to impose upon the ignorance and wealth of the *Engelskmand*, for it is almost needless to say that our countrymen enjoy the same reputation as in other parts of the continent, for being one and all Croesus, Mr. E. ——'s wit and readiness extricated him out of more than one dilemma, in which his excitable Hibernian temperament at times involved him in. He punished one or two attempts at imposition by giving the delinquents that genuine English receipt "a good hiding," but as the Norwegian law imposes rather a heavy fine on this species of entertainment, Mr. E. —— soon found that it was too expensive a game to be continued without some little precaution.

One winter evening he was on his way home, a violent gust of wind blew off his hat. As it was too dark to see a yard before him, he got a man who lived in an adjoining hut to try and find it with a lantern, at the same time borrowing an old hat till his own was recovered. In the midst of their search another gust came, and Mr. E. ——'s borrowed tile followed the fate of the first. Neither of them could be found that night, and the peasant thereupon instantly claimed a couple of dollars damage for the loss of his property, the

outside value of which Mr. E. —— assessed at a mark. The peasant persisted, however, in his demand, and threatened legal proceedings if it were not paid.

A few days later Mr. E. ——, hearing from a neighbour that the peasant had found his own hat, although concealing the fact in the hope of being paid his claim, determined to give him a lesson, and invited him to his house for the purpose as he said of settling matters. The peasant came, was shown into the court-yard at the back, and Mr. E. ——, having carefully sent away all the servants, to preclude the possibility of their appearing against him in evidence, gave the dishonest peasant a tremendous thrashing in full charge of all claims. The proceeding was summary, but effectual; the natives from that day forward held Mr. E. —— in salutary fear, and gave up all further attempts to get the better of him in their mutual dealings.

July 13th. In the morning we took a run through Trondhjem, and purchased a few souvenirs for friends at home. There are one or two decent shops where a variety of suitable knick-knacks may be found—Broekstads being the principal booksellers. Seeing in a window some oil paintings of Norwegian scenery on sale, we went in and enquired the prices, and eventually, for a moderate sum, became the possessors of a striking view of the

Dovrefjeld range, taken from the plateau as we had seen it a few days before. (*See frontispiece.*)

The artist, whose name is Jahn, appears to be a rising man, having studied to some purpose both at Copenhagen and Düsseldorf. The rendering of his subjects is truthful in the extreme; the drawing vigorous and correct; and he possesses the rare merit of refraining from too free a use of the more vivid colors, and representing nature in the garb she generally assumes in these northern latitudes.

We left Trondhjem at two p.m., after a warm *farvel* (farewell) from our host and his family, with whom we had struck up quite a friendship during the few days we had spent in his house. They were very pleasant, homely people, and had made us feel most thoroughly at home. The wife was one in a thousand, and the fruits of her vigilance, and housewifely qualities were visible in the clean, comfortable aspect of each household detail.

Should any of our readers ever find their way as far north as Trondhjem, they will find the Hotel "Victoria" all that we have described, and as the guide books say "worthy of their highest confidence."

We had taken berths to Molde on the government steamer "Norland," one of the line that runs weekly from Christiania up to Hammerfest, near the North Cape, a distance of 2,000 miles. The voyage

occupies from thirteen to fourteen days, but this period includes stoppages at more than seventy towns and villages along the coast, extra time being allowed at Bergen, Trondhjem, and the more important places.

During the entire journey the ship is within sight of land, and for more than three fourths of the distance runs within the protection of the belt of rocks and islands that encircles the Norwegian coast as by a natural breakwater, so that all the advantages of the sea voyage are obtained with but few of the discomforts. A return trip to Hammerfest and back, may thus be made for about £20, inclusive of provisions; and the accommodation on board the steamers is remarkably good. The scenery on many parts of the voyage, notably between Bergen, and Molde, and among the Lofoden Islands, is magnificent; and those who do not possess the strength or determination to support the fatigue of a land journey, might search the world through for a finer continuous series of marine scenery.

We steamed out of the harbour at the appointed time, with a full complement of passengers, among them not a few pilgrims to the *Tusind Aars Fest*, which was to be held a few days later at Haugesund, on the south-west coast, to celebrate the thousandth anniversary of the existence of Norway as a united nation.

We passed close under the little island of Munkholm, which lies in an exact line with Munkegaden, the principal street of Trondhjem, and the Cathedral at the end of it. There is a legend extant to the effect, that in olden times a subterranean passage existed from the monastery on the island to the Cathedral, for the benefit of the religious, but all traces of it have long since disappeared. The monastery has for several centuries been converted into a state prison, and in one of its dungeons Peter Schumacher, the Chancellor of Christian V. of Denmark, was imprisoned for eighteen years, and they show a hole in the stone floor, said to have been worn by his ceaseless walk to and fro.

Our course lay for some hours northwards, to make the entrance of the Trondhjem Fiord, which had here a width of from three to four miles, with grand mountain ranges encircling it on every side.

The time passed away pleasantly enough in making acquaintance with our fellow passengers, airing our broken Norwegian, and giving some of the young ladies lessons in English,—which is now more generally studied throughout Norway than even French or German. One party of lively damsels were on their way to the *Fest*, under the charge of a venerable Herr Pastor, whom one of the ladies informed us united to

his dignity of parish priest that of a member of the Storthing, which is elected and meets in Christiania once in three years.

At Beja, our most northern point, a boat load of emigrants for the States came off to us. For so thinly peopled a country as Norway, the number of her sons that annually seek their fortunes in the New World is something amazing, being no less than 40,000 a year, or over two per cent. of the entire population.

Some little excitement was produced during the evening by the announcement that a whale was in sight, and we all made a simultaneous rush to the side where he had been last seen to spout. We gazed, however, in vain, for Leviathan having probably taken in a sufficient stock of fresh air for a lengthened dive, refused to gratify our curiosity by a further re-appearance.

Towards midnight, we ran into the harbour of Christiansund, which is landlocked on every side, and the entrance to it so narrow that a biscuit could be tossed on to the ship from either shore. It was a striking sight, as in the soft waning light we glided in, to see the town suddenly as by magic burst into view all round us.

We were soon surrounded by boats—there not being sufficient depth of water for us to get alongside the pier—and most of our passengers availed themselves of the hour or two we remained, to

land and explore the town. The Reverend member of the Storthing had sought his berth long before our arrival, but as his fair charges were anxious to have a midnight ramble on shore, we offered to accompany them, and the Herr Pastor having given his consent, we were soon scaling the steep heights on which Christiansund is built.

Although it has a population of more than 6000 inhabitants, no such thing as a regular, well defined street is to be met with throughout its extent. So irregular is the ground on which the town stands, that it was no easy task to pilot our way through its intricacies, and more than once had we to claim the assistance of chance passers-by to put us in the right path again.

Ours was a lively party ; the damsels were as full of fun and frolic as young kittens, and the quiet deserted streets rang with their merry laughter, causing more than one staid old burgher to show his night capped head at the window, to see who were thus disturbing his night's rest.

One noteworthy feature in the otherwise uninteresting look of the place, was the luxuriance of the flowers that appeared at every casement, and of the creepers, especially the honeysuckle, which covered the fronts of each house. The air was fairly redolent with their scent, and in spite of the fears of the "watchmen," with which we were laughingly threatened by our fair friends, we

presented them each with a bouquet, to serve, as we told them, for an *erindring* (remembrance) of our midnight ramble in Christiansund, and hailing our bark which had remained waiting our return—were once more put on board the “Norland.”

After a few hours fitful sleep in the somewhat stuffy cabins, we were landed at Molde in the early morning, and found that the small steamer which runs once a week to Veblungsnoes, at the entrance to the Romsdal, did not leave till two p.m.

Molde ranks in Norway as a town, having a population of some 2,000 souls, and occupies a lovely situation on a small island, facing the mainland, commanding in clear weather a splendid panoramic view of the entire range of the Romsdal mountains.

Unfortunately for our chance of seeing this, the grandest district of Norway, to advantage, the weather had changed for the worse, and in lieu of the clear unclouded sky of the last few days, heavy masses of cloud had piled themselves up on the mountain sides, completely hiding their summits, and leaving only their bases visible. Not a breath of air was stirring, the atmosphere was like an oven, and the hours, till the boat started, dragged wearily away.

Fortunately, the place boasted a fair hotel (Bucks), and the operations of breakfasting and dining did

something towards passing away the time. In the interval between the two, a party of us, comprising a German from Hamburg, with his sister and a Norwegian lady friend, essayed an excursion up the neighbouring heights, but all our energies were prostrated by the vapour-like heat, and after climbing a few hundred yards, we all, by a simultaneous impulse, threw ourselves down on a grassy bank, till it was time to descend again to the town.

The steamer to Veblungsnoes was a tiny toy-like craft, which made, however, rapid progress on the still waveless waters of the inland fiords we were now traversing.

These fiords are the one characteristic in which Norwegian scenery differs from that of any other country. The whole coast line from the Naze to the North Cape resembles as it were a huge rocky honeycomb, indented by hundreds of fissures running up into the land, in some instances for more than a hundred miles, radiating and sub-dividing again and again into lesser branches, which stretch out their arms in all directions. The rocks, forming their shores, generally rise perpendicularly, their summits, thousands of feet above, being often clothed in perpetual snow, while their bases are laved in well nigh unfathomable waters. The main channel of the fiord rarely exceeds four or five miles in width, and that of the branch fiords from one to two, while here and there they contract to a mere

rift in the rocks, like the Naero (narrow) fiord, a tributary of the Sogne, which is barely 500 yards from shore to shore.

There is something very peculiar and weird-like in the aspect of these fiords, their most striking feature being the almost utter absence of life, human or animal, throughout their extent. Save at the mouths of the mountain rivers that here and there run into them, scarce an habitation is to be seen, for so steep and sterile are the overhanging rocks, that hardly a goat can with difficulty keep its footing, and snatch a precarious subsistence. Now and then a sail glimmers on the horizon, and the smoke of the little steamer, that at regular intervals carries all the advantages of civilization into these secluded inlets, darkens the blue sky ; but these are rare occurrences, and days often pass away without the still waters being disturbed by even a fishing boat.

The only exception to this state of repose is when the fiord intersects the main road between two towns, thus necessitating a ferry for the conveyance of travellers and merchandise. As a notable instance of this, the road between Bergen and Christiania is broken up by no less than four fiords in the first hundred miles, fully half the distance having to be accomplished by water, which is far from an unpleasant change after the rough jolting of the carrioles.

As our paddles dashed the waters into foam, we could not avoid the thought that a steamer is the last place from which to see a fiord to advantage. The still peaceful calm and desert-like solitude that are its great charms are altogether destroyed by the shrieking, puffing iron monster, which seems to challenge comparison for man's skill and power with the giant forces of nature that surround it. In a frail boat, with perchance the descendants of the Vikings who ravaged our coasts a thousand years ago, urging it onwards, we feel more completely our own miserable insignificance, and as the eye strains to reach the peaks towering to the clouds, and the ear is deafened by the descending cataracts, we acknowledge and adore the Almighty power that brought it all into being.

The dense cloud curtain that was so jealously hiding the beauties of the celebrated valley we had come so far to visit, seemed, as we approached the end of the fiord, as if about to rise, for a transitory gleam of sunshine shot out for a moment, and lighted up the long vista of mountain ranges with a pale, watery glow.

There were two landing places that lead equally into the Romsdal, about half a mile apart from each other,—Aandals-nœs, and Veblungs-nœs, (*nœs* being equivalent to the Scotch “ness”—and as the steamer touched

at both, we went on shore at the first named.

In the boat with us was a German doctor who had served in his medical capacity all through the late war, from Spicheren, where he had a finger taken off by one of the first shots fired, to the capitulation of Paris. He was about to pay a very flying visit to the Romsdal, by driving some twenty or thirty miles into it before night, and returning early the next morning, to catch the steamer on its return to Molde.

The entrance of this celebrated valley where it opens upon the fiord must, under favourable auspices, be wonderfully fine, but we could only guess at the beauties that lay hidden behind the mass of clouds, that became at each moment denser, covering all but the lower slopes of the mountains under an impenetrable veil. Three miles from Veblungs-nœs, we came to the Hotel Aak, which Lady Di Beauclerk has described in such glowing terms in her *Winter in Norway*.

Although the hotel is large enough to accommodate nearly twenty guests, it is always a difficult matter during the summer to obtain rooms without ordering them beforehand. We were fortunate in getting the only one vacant; and the next arrivals after us were obliged to post on to the next station Horgheim, which, owing to its pro-

pinquity to Aak, gets very little patronage, and consequently is extremely bad.

We were pleasantly surprised at finding a batch of letters for us here, which we eagerly devoured. In the interval before supper (all the meals at Aak being at fixed hours), we walked down to the banks of the Rauma river, which runs just opposite the house, and is said to be a good salmon stream, a mile or two of it being reserved by the proprietor for his guests to fish in. The situation of the hotel no doubt deserves the high eulogium passed upon it by the fair authoress, "the sharp peak of the Romsdal's horn towering above it, and ranges of snow-covered heights surrounding it on all sides." But we saw nothing of all this, and could therefore neither accept nor dissent from her ladyship's opinion, that Aak is the most lovely spot in Norway.

Supper introduced us to a room full of our countrymen and Americans, and as the appurtenances of the table approached as near as might be to English tastes and customs, we could, without much stretch of imagination, fancy ourselves back in our own land.

CHAPTER VII.

Lady pedestrians.—The Vermedals Foss.—Weather-bound at Stueflaatten.—Tusind Aars Festen.—Harald Harfager.

JULY 15th. It was late before we made a start, for the beds at Aak being somewhat more roomy and comfortable than the generality of those we had been accustomed to of late, we indulged in an extra snooze. In other respects we thought Aak over-rated, and, shall we say it, spoilt by the English element that forms its principal support. There are a certain class of our countrymen who, disregarding the wise saw of "doing at Rome as Rome does," persist in carrying with them, wherever they go, their own insular ideas and notions, grafting them on to those of the country they visit, and often with the most incongruous and ridiculous results.

The clouds were still provokingly low, so that at times it seemed as if we could have thrown a stone into their midst. Only once did they part for a while, and allow us to catch a momentary glimpse of the Troltinderne (witches' peaks), so called from the fantastic shapes they assume. The effect as they rose up out of the sea of mist was very weird like, and quite in accordance with the popular tradition, which attributes them to the

handiwork of a mighty wizard, who in olden times dwelt hereabouts.

Near Fladmark the scene was extremely wild and striking. The valley contracted to a narrow pass, and huge masses of rock, which in by-gone ages had fallen from the heights above, lay piled along the road side like titanic remains. From the mountain sides, which rose precipitously above our heads, a succession of water-falls came thundering down, looking as though they were leaping out of the clouds. At one point we counted no less than five within a distance of a mile—their snow white columns standing out in bold relief against the dark face of the rocks they rushed down.

At the station where we dined we met two young lady pedestrians (the dagbog chronicled their names as Anna and Maria Rogstad), who had left Trondhjem in the same steamer as ourselves. They were on their way to visit an uncle in the Gulbrandsdal, 150 miles away, and intimated as coolly as possible their intention of walking the whole way, doing an average of three Norwegian miles a day. A heavy deer-hide knapsack lay at their feet, the joint-stock possession of the two sisters, and on our innocently enquiring how they sent it on from place to place—one of them, in a quiet matter of fact way replied, *vi bære det* (we carry it). And so they did, for being just ready to start, the elder and stronger of the two

swung it over her shoulder like a feather ; we rendered our assistance (evidently superfluous, though,) in adjusting the straps and hooks, and off they trudged at a brave pace, leaving us in admiration of their pluck.

A fact like this speaks volumes for the safety of travelling in Norway, and is a striking evidence that their system of home education produces strong healthy women who are not rendered effeminate by over-coddling. It will be a long time, we fancy, before two young unprotected ladies could walk through England without insult or annoyance, yet here, in Norway, it is a matter of every day occurrence, for a mile or two farther on we met another party of five *demoiselles errantes*, but, wiser than our friends, they had hired a *stolkjærre* to bring on their baggage, each of them taking it in turn to act as coachman.

We had a lovely walk to Ormein, the next station. The road ran at frequent intervals between avenues of birch and poplar, and the glimpses we now and again obtained from beneath their leafy shade of the rugged mountain sides were very charming. We passed one waterfall, that descended from so great a height that its tiny thread of water was broken up ere it reached the bottom into a cloud of white smoke, which floated in mid-air along the face of the rock.

We reached Ormein early in the evening ; the clouds had somewhat cleared away, and patches of blue sky cheered us with a prospect of fine weather. The station was delightfully situated on the hill side, overlooking a narrow valley, with the Rauma river in its midst. Down the face of the opposite mountain, which was fringed from summit unto base with pines, descended the Vermedals Foss, the pride of the Romsdal, and the most grandly picturesque cascade we had yet seen in Norway. Unlike the others we had passed earlier in the day, it first leapt in a series of bounds half way down the mountain side, and then spread out like a fan into a number of branches, their pearly foam glancing like lines of silver through the dense mass of dark green pines.

While supper was preparing, we set off to make a nearer acquaintance with the Fos. Crossing the river we scrambled up a steep forest path, which brought us to some flour and saw mills, that utilised the tremendous water power, by diverting the stream into a number of troughs so as to set in motion the various wheels. A ricketty bridge of rough logs, thrown down carelessly over the fall, formed a capital vantage ground for seeing it to advantage, and the seeming insecurity of our frail stand point, shaken like an aspen as it was, by the furious rush of the waters, lent additional excitement to the scene.

There is a mountain called Storhøtten (the great hat), a short distance from Ormein, which can be ascended easily in a day, and from which a magnificent view of the whole Romsdal range is obtained. As my young friend was anxious to "do" his first mountain, it was agreed that if the morning were propitious we should, accompanied by a guide, make the ascent. The best man for the purpose, we were told, was the station-master, but as he chanced to be away from home, we had to content ourselves with a less experienced *vei-viser* (literally way shower), and having made our arrangements for an early start, and ordered a stock of provisions, to be discussed on the top, we retired to bed to fortify ourselves against the fatigues of the morrow.

July 16th. All our hopes of achieving renown by scaling Storhøtten vanished into thin air, with the first glimpse we got through the curtainless windows of the thick cloud canopy that had again descended on the valley, and which soon changed into a small fine rain, that announced as plainly as it could speak its intention of making a day of it.

A mile or two beyond Ormein, a hoarse roar told us that we were approaching some considerable fall. It was not visible from the road, the overhanging rocks hiding all save the smoke of the spray, that rose up as from a gigantic cauldron. A climb of a few yards over the rough ground to our

right brought us to the river bank, some little distance below the fall, which is called the Söndre Slettafossen. From a fine wide stream it suddenly contracted between walls of perpendicular rock, to a width of not more than twenty feet, and through the rift the rush of the boiling maddened waters was absolutely awe-inspiring in its terrible grandeur. Spanning the abyss was a bridge of five pines, undefended by a parapet, and the trunks of one or two having been partially rotted by the steam of the ascending spray, the passage was not devoid of danger, the more so as the heavy rain rendered the foot-hold slippery and insecure. In a natural cave, formed by an angle of the rocks, we sheltered for a while, and gazed our fill at the wondrous spectacle.

The road now mounted continually, the country being covered with woods, the constantly recurring water-falls in their midst, having a lovely effect as we caught sight of them in the far distance, their silvery streaks lighting up the sombre hues of the thick forests.

The rain came down each moment more doggedly, so that on reaching Stueflaatten about noon, and finding the quarters "pernicious snug," we halted for the day, and had every reason to rejoice at our determination, for, in addition to the rain, a piercing north wind had begun to blow down the valley, so that, though in mid-July, we were glad to see one of the huge cast iron stoves at work, and a

heap of pine logs being brought in, we were soon luxuriating in the warmth it speedily diffused through the *gjest rum*, the walls of which were hung with portraits of sundry episcopal worthies of the Lutheran Church, their necks encased in those exaggerated ruffs which date from a period coeval with our Elizabethan age, and are worn to this day by the Scandinavian bishops. Cheek by jowl with them were several German prints of Catholic subjects, for the Norwegians are remarkably free from prejudice in their choice of sacred art, and it is no uncommon thing to see Doctor Martin Luther (who is of course their great favorite), scowling at Our Lady and S. Joseph, and other saints of the Church.

The day dragged wearily through. We asked for some papers to while away the time, but the files of the Christiania Morgen Blad (morning leaf) they brought us were nearly a month old, and consequently a little stale. Among them, however, we found an adaptation of the "British Workman" in a Norwegian dress, with fairly executed copies of the same bold wood engravings which adorn our English periodical. The literary part of it was decidedly superior to the usual run of the articles of the "goody" sort, which form the bulk of the reading in the "British Workman," and we found in one number a most interesting account of the Arctic discoveries of Barentz, the celebrated Dutch

pilot, who, in the year 1596, wintered with his ship's crew in Nova Zembla. The quaint, graphic record of their sufferings and privations, and of the shifts they were put to in order to preserve life, is one of the most striking pictures in the long and varied roll of Arctic adventure.

July 17th. The morning broke dark and lowering, and so bitterly cold, that, although in our overcoats and walking at our sharpest pace, we had hard work to keep up the circulation. The wind, which blew with great force, and as though it came direct from the North Pole, was fortunately at our backs. The road was uninteresting, or perhaps it may be that the adverse influences of cloudy skies and occasional icy rainfall, prevented our giving much heed to the surrounding scenery.

At Molmen, a poor and dirty station, we lunched on milk and Huntley & Palmer's biscuits, which, with those of other makers, are finding their way into all parts of Norway, and make a splendid substitute for the black, and too often sour, rye bread.

Our *skyds-gut* from here, a great hulking fellow, spoke a little English, and was so anxious to display his proficiency, that, although on our arrival we had ordered a horse and *stolkjærre* to be ready, he kept bursting into the *gjest rum* with—"Do you want 'osse?" till we got disgusted with his pertinacity, and bundled him out with scant ceremony.

We drove on to Lesje Jernværk (Iron works). A hundred years ago a large establishment was erected here by Government, but in spite of the plentiful supply of fuel from the surrounding forests it turned out a failure, and nothing now remains of it but a few ruined walls of the smelting furnace, and the blackened look of the ground round about.

Being fairly frozen by our ride, we walked on to Holset; more than half of our to-day's journey lay over a sort of mountain plateau, which, although nothing like so wild or elevated as the Dovrefjelds, had all its characteristics of dreary grandeur, being completely uncultivated, and filled up with a far-stretching swamp, broken here and there by clumps of dwarf pines and scrub.

Near Holset, the road ran between immense pine forests, and as it was nearly knee-deep in sand, the walking was such hard work, that we preferred a more round-about path through the woods. The mountains were now fast losing the serrated array of peaks, that distinguished the Romsdal range, and assuming again the ordinary flat topped summits which are the one great drawback of Norwegian mountains.

The snow lay in one unbroken mass along the slopes opposite the station, which accorded well with the wintry blast, that as night came on increased in severity, and made us cower round the blazing stove as though in mid December.

Up a lateral valley, which we could just catch sight of, ran a horse-path over the fjelds to Lom, in Vaage, which, for a fjeld route is said to be very fair travelling. It takes about a day and a half from Holset; the tourist leaving here in the afternoon, will reach the first night a mountain sæter (where a rough bed, with milk and fladbröd is all that must be expected), reaching Lom in the evening of the next day. Had the weather been fine, it was our intention to have followed this route, then to cross the Jotunfjeld from Lom to Skjolden, at the head of the Lyster, a branch of the Sogne Fiord, and so by steamer to Bergen.

We were disappointed at thus losing our chance of making acquaintance with these wild districts, which form so large a portion of Norwegian scenery, and one of its most characteristic features. But it would have been worse than rash for us to have ventured in face of the present weather, for even at the best of times the way is but a rough and dangerous one, and should a storm but arise, the water-courses—that at every step cross the fjeld—swell into rivers, the path, that only the sagacity of the horse and guide enables one to follow, changes into a roaring torrent, and thick mists and snow fogs hang over all.

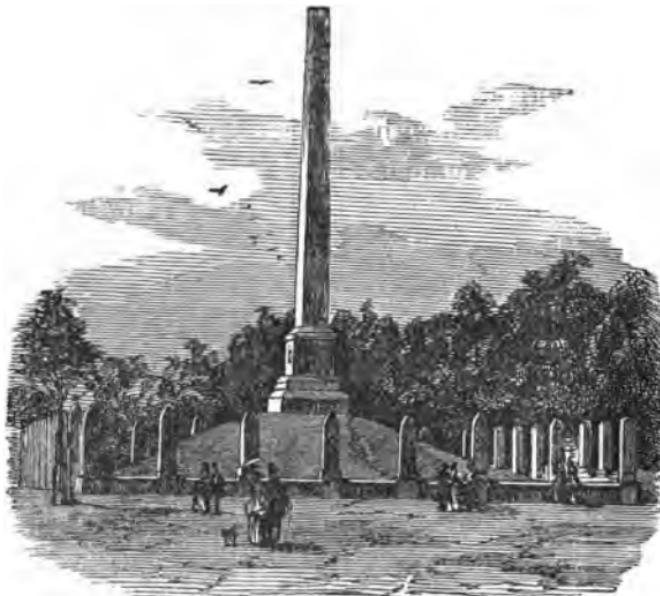
A modern Norwegian writer has given us a graphic sketch of the fjeld scenery, in the following passage:—"When," he says, "the traveller ascends

“from the cultivated valleys, he passes step by step
“through a variety of regions. First comes the
“region of pines, which in these sheltered spots,
“under the shadow of the over-hanging mountains
“rise thick and luxuriant, serving as shield against
“the wind and sun. Although the paths used by
“the wood-cutters intersect them in every direction,
“one can seldom see far a-head ; the road is easily
“lost, and it is no easy task to find the bridge, or
“ford over the mountain stream, which is often
“swollen by a hundred tiny tributaries, into a rushing
“dangerous torrent. Where the fir trees cease, the
“silver birch, with their graceful drooping branches
“and pleasant sighing murmur, take their place.
“Now the view becomes clearer, and the path easier
“to follow, and as the birch gradually thin, they
“are interspersed with an occasional pale willow,
“and many a clump of fjeld flowers cropping up in
“tufts around. The prospect here is wide and
“unobstructed, and with loosened rein, and the
“horse following behind, one wanders at will, for
“on the mountain side the way lies as the crow
“flies, without any of the turns that it takes in the
“valley below.

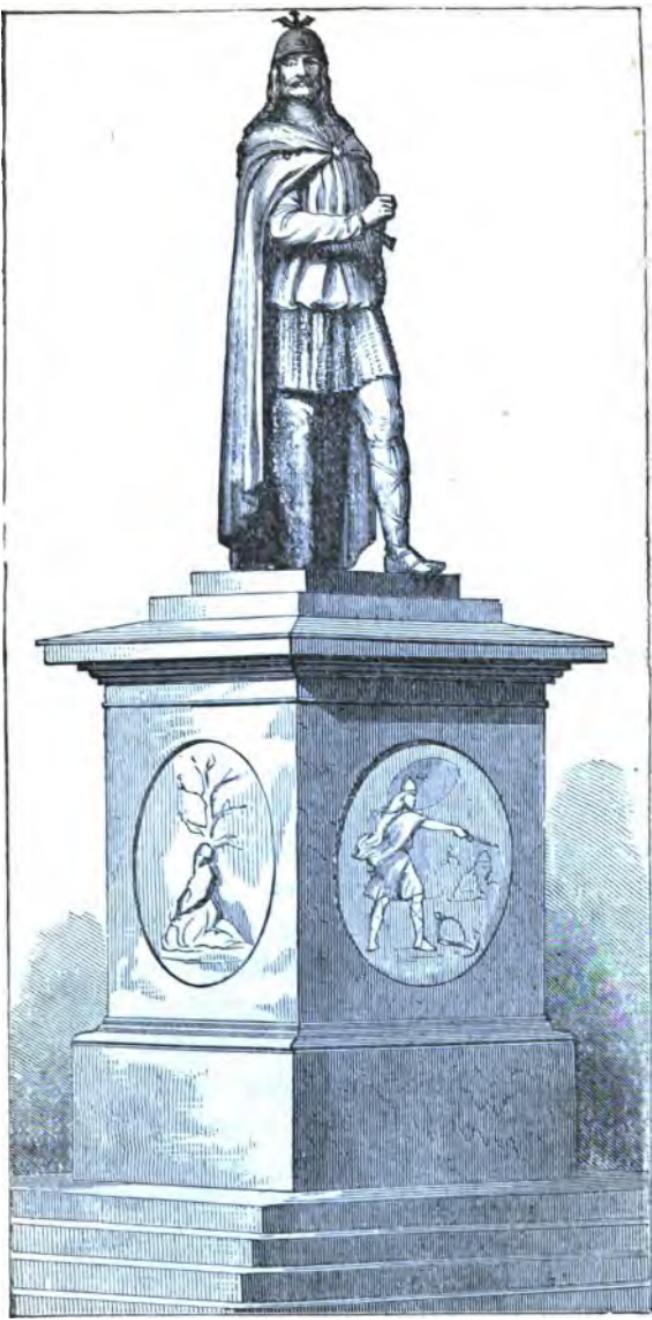
“The summit gained, a vast waste extends as far
“as the eye can reach, covered with a gray expanse
“of huge boulders of rock, between which the
“passage is most laborious, a continual see-saw up
“and down,—now grazing the shins against a sharp

“angle,— now halting to extricate the horse’s feet
“from some rocky trap in which the poor beast
“often leaves its shoes, fixed as in a vice. Over the
“last slope, and there is the snow-covered home of
“the reindeer, a boundless plain of stone, with here
“and there masses of snow, a roaring torrent that
“has its source at the glacier’s foot, and all around
“a dazzling array of peaks, robed in eternal snow.”
Th. Kjerulff.

July 18th. To day was the thousand years festival (*tusind aars fest*) to celebrate the millenary of Norway’s existence as a united nation. For weeks beforehand preparations have been in progress



HARALD HARFAGER’S OBELISK AT HAUGESUND.



STATUE OF HARALD HARFAGER, CHRISTIANIA.

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for making the day a national holiday. Throughout the entire country special services will be held in every church, while in all the principal towns rejoicings on an extensive scale are to take place, with illuminations, balls, and merry making for every class of the community. Haugesund, on the west coast, will be the great point of interest, for it was here that was raised the funeral pile of King Harald Harfager. An obelisk of granite has been erected on the spot where his remains reposed, and round it will to day assemble all the learned and noble in the land, to honor by their voice and presence the memory of Norway's first sole monarch.

In the Heimskringla, or Sagas of the Norwegian kings, written in the eleventh century, by Snorro Sturleson, the Icelandic chronicler, there is a graphic and interesting account of the life and exploits of this Harald Harfager. We see him first, a mere boy, the ruler of a petty state which he had just inherited at his father's death. Several of the neighbouring kings hoping to take advantage of his youth and inexperience lead forces against him, but aided by the skill and advice of his uncle Guttorm, "the leader," he defeated them all in succession, and finally surprising four of the upland kings at Ringsaker, in Hedemarken, he burnt them in their beds, in the delightful style of warfare peculiar to the age. Annexing all their kingdoms to his own, he became the most powerful king

in that part of the country, and it was at this point that the event occurred, without which the festival of to day might perhaps have been adjourned for a few hundred years. Hearing of the beauty of a maiden named Gyda, Harald sent envoys to ask her hand. The young lady, however, rejected his suit with contumely, refusing to marry him till "he should subdue to himself the whole of Norway, "and rule over it as fully and freely as king Eirik "ruled over Sweden, or king Gorm over Denmark." Instead of sharing the anger of his followers at the rebuff, Harald received it as an incentive to more active exertion, and in the presence of his army he solemnly called the Immortal Gods to witness that "he would neither clip nor comb his hair till he "had conquered all the land, with scalt and duties, "and domains, or die in the attempt."

Henceforward, his career of conquest was rapid and unchecked by defeat. King after king went down before his power, and in ten years from the date of his oath he had crushed out all opposition, and held supreme and undisputed sway over the whole of Norway.

When his task was finally accomplished, the young lady, whose burning words had been the moving spring of his conduct, was added to the list of his already numerous wives, and one of the king's most renowned Jarles, had the distinguished privilege of becoming for the nonce the royal

hairdresser, and a pretty job he must have had in bringing the mass of tangled locks again into shape.

It was then discovered, what had been hitherto unsuspected, that the king had a remarkably "nobby head of hair," of the light color peculiar to the northern nations, and as in those days every one from prince to peasant had his nick-name, Harald was henceforth known by the title of Harfager, or the "Fair Hair." (Appendix, Note II.)

As we drove on to Hollaker, and came in sight of the church of Lesje, which stood on an eminence in the middle of the valley, we could see numerous groups of peasants in holiday attire, responding to the summons of its bell, which was chiming for the special service. In many of the secluded western valleys, where the old picturesque costumes still retain their footing, it is a pretty sight to see the dalesmen wending their way to church; but in the travelled district we were now in, the conventional attire of modern Europe has long since displaced the more becoming national dress. In the Gulbrandsdal, the only vestige of the ancient costume that has survived is a bright red woollen cap, with a pointed over-hanging top, like those worn by the fishermen of the Italian coasts of the Mediterranean.

Our ride was a terribly severe one, the wind having abated nothing of its keenness, and on

getting to Hollaker, we were glad to take refuge before a roaring fire, which was soon made for us on the spacious old-fashioned hearth of the station kitchen. There, while gradually thawing and discussing some comforting compound, we watched with interest the management and details of a Norwegian household. The *huus-moder* (house-mother), being in a delicate state of health (attributable to twins, who, like the young Micawbers were unceasing in their demands for refreshment), gave her orders from an easy chair, and watched with vigilant eye the progress of her servants in their respective tasks. One was lunching from a huge bowl of *grød* (porridge), dipping each spoonful as she took it into a pan of milk which stood beside it.

My young friend not having as yet made acquaintance with this native luxury, was induced after some persuasion to try it. The *grød* was, as it usually is, excellent, but the Norwegians have a great fancy for keeping their milk till it is as sour as verjuice, and no sooner had he taken a mouthful, than he made a face expressive of anything but delight. The eyes of all the *piges* however, were upon him, and he was compelled to make a virtue of necessity, and swallow the nauseous mixture, which he did with Spartan heroism, whilst registering a mental vow to give *suur melk* a wide berth for the future.

We walked on from here to Dombas, which we had left some twelve days before. The valley as we advanced gradually narrowed to a mere point winding picturesquely through dense pine forests. We soon caught sight of our old friend the Dovrefjeld road, creeping up towards Fogstuen, with a long array of snow covered peaks overhanging it.

We dined at Dombas, and had a chat with the clerk in charge of the telegraph station, who had been there fifteen years, and spoke feelingly of the dull and dreary nature of his post.

We reached Toftemoen early in the evening, having arranged our plans so as to sleep under the same roof with the descendant of Harald Harfager, and pay at the same time a visit to his brother's farmstead, crowning the slope of the opposite hill side, and which for its wealth in horses and cattle is one of the most noteworthy in the Gulbrandsdal.

Ordering supper to be ready on our return, we set out for the *bondegaard* (farm). It was a pretty walk at first through a wood, and then by a steep mountain path along the banks of a torrent, the waters of which turned the wheels of two or three flour and saw mills in connection with the farm.

We found the building, as in most mountain *gaards* of any size, forming, as at Jerkin, a quadrangle, with openings at the corners. Seeing no one about, we walked in, and inspected with much interest the pile of weather beaten old-world

looking buildings, some of which dated from more than two hundred years back. All was of wood except the roofs, which were covered with huge slabs of *fri stene*, like those described as composing the neighbouring church on our journey northwards. Many of the over-hanging eaves and projecting doorways were carved in a rough but effective manner, and the walls painted a dull heavy red colour. The living rooms extended along two sides of the square, while the rest was taken up in cow-houses and dairies, with granaries and store-houses of fodder for the cattle during the winter.*

A man—whom we first mistook for our host Tofte, and accosted as such—now made his appearance from the dairy, but a closer view of him, and the surprise depicted on his face at being claimed as an acquaintance, discovered our error to us, and we then found that it was his brother, the owner of the farm, whom we were addressing. We apologized for the mistake, on the score of the strong family likeness, and the old fellow, who was if anything more stolid and undemonstrative than the junior branch, bade us welcome (*velkommen*), and politely invited us to enter.

Brandy and cakes were at once produced, and we all hob-knobbed amicably together. We drank

* In some of the poorer districts the leaves and smaller branches of the birch are largely used for this purpose.

Tofte's health, alluded in complimentary terms to the "Thousand years Festival," and suggested that as the descendant of Harald Harfager, he ought to have been at Haugesund, to take part in the festivities.

On the walls of the room we sat in, hung a series of delightful daubs of Sinclair's expedition, executed by a native artist in a style of art peculiarly his own, and which strongly excited the risible faculties of our young friend, by the shock they inflicted on his artistic susceptibilities. The closing tableau, which was especially rich, portrayed a handful of gigantic peasants, halberd in hand, hewing down an unresisting crowd of terror-stricken Scotch, who were on their knees begging in vain for mercy.

Expressing a wish to see the rest of the house, Tofte led the way into a huge state apartment, used only on state occasions at Christmas (*Juul*) and holiday times, or on the occurrence of a birth, death, or marriage in the family. It measured some forty feet, by nearly thirty, and was supported in the centre by a wooden pillar. Along one entire end of the room ran an immense sideboard, called a *skarp*, which rose as high as the ceiling, and was carved and gilt with almost barbaric magnificence. An opening in the centre admitted the light through one of the windows of the room, and the name of the owner, and the date of its construction—some time in the last

century—were emblazoned in flaming letters upon it. Altogether, it was the most gorgeous and extensive piece of upholstery we ever saw in Norway; and we had a sort of intuitive feeling that its interior would prove no less interesting than its exterior adornments.

Anxious though we were to see the contents of this wonderful cupboard, we could not so far forget our manners as to put the question point blank; the one or two broad hints that we let fall were altogether thrown away upon so obtuse an individual as Tofte, and our curiosity had to remain unsatisfied.

It was no easy task to draw our host into conversation, for he was emphatically a man of few words, contenting himself with replying by a sententious "*Ja*" (yes), to our enquiries as to his farm and belongings. Unimpressionable though he was, our admiration of his grand old house tickled his vanity, and waxing by degrees confidential, he told us that he had more than forty horses, and a hundred cows, besides numerous herds of small deer in the shape of sheep and pigs.

We bade the old fellow adieu, with a regret at our inability to make a longer stay, and accept his invitation to inspect his stock and farm buildings, which, from the cursory glance we had of them, seemed all in most excellent order, bearing ample evidence to the opulence and prosperity of their proprietor.

CHAPTER VIII.

Unexpected Friends.—A Ball at the Sorenscrivers.—Listad Sæter—Lillehammer.—Christiania.—Home.

JULY 19th. Although we were now passing over the same ground again, the scenery, from the different condition under which we saw it, had all the charm of novelty. The weather had at length changed for the better, old Sol had once more put in an appearance, and the gorge of Rusten, through which our walk lay, looked gloriously bright and fairy like. Midway in it, we were overtaken by Tofte junior, in a swell private carriage, *en route* for a large farm he has in the Hedalen, a valley some forty miles away, and between which and Toftemoen he makes constant journeys to and fro. Immediately on seeing us he dismounted, and invited us to take his place, which we of course declined, and after a mutual interchange of civilities he drove off on his way.

We overtook him again at Laurgaard, where we dined in company with myriads of flies, which covered every wall, and when in motion fairly darkened the air. We met here an old acquaintance, in the person of Kammerherr Gjerdrum, who had been up as far as Namsos, several hundred

miles north of Trondhjem, where he had been an eye-witness of a terrible fire, which swept away nearly every house in the place, leaving but a few cinder heaps to shew where the town had once stood.

We slept at Moen, taking our chance of the station accommodation, in spite of the suspicious silence of the guide books. We should not, however, recommend any future tourist imitating our example, for the place was of the poorest, the beds execrable, and the larder empty of everything save some very high veal, *flad bröd*, and rank butter. By dint of a little gentle expostulation, we managed to inaugurate a search in the hen house, which produced three eggs, with which and a cup of weak tea appropriately called in Norwegian *te vand* (tea water), we eked out a meal.

Remembering the grand looking waterfall we had seen from the road a fortnight before, we set out to explore it. Starting from the mills that nestled at the foot of the first fall, we climbed the hill side above them, till we gained a narrow mountain path skirting the very edge of the precipice above the torrent, which seemed to have fairly eaten into the wall of rock, and forced a passage for its imprisoned waters to the outer world. After a climb that we should have enjoyed better had we been professional rope dancers, we finally emerged on to a projecting turf-covered

ledge, commanding a view of a second and larger fall, the only disadvantage being that looking at it as we were, from behind, it lost a good deal of its effect. What remained, however, was sufficiently striking. Before us rose two immense buttresses of rock, their pine clad summits towering above our heads, while their bases were lost in the smoke and spray of the boiling cauldron far below.

Across the abyss was suspended in mid air what looked like a fragile bridge, composed of a single pine, but in reality was one of the irrigating pipes through which the waters of some friendly stream were conveyed to the valley below. It served to set, as in a frame, a lovely view of the country we had just passed through, stretching away into the dim distance in a varied panorama of valley, lake, and fell, its bright coloring steeped in a glorious sunset, all the more vivid from the deep shadows of our secluded retreat. From the gulf at our feet rose the roar of the foaming snow-white waters, rushing madly forwards to the entrance of the rocky cavern they were pent up in, and throwing themselves out of their prison house, as if in triumph at their escape.

The rock we were on seemed fairly shaken by their wild tumult, and we breathed more freely when we had placed a wide space between us. Following now a path that led us up the gorge, and finding a rough bridge some half a mile

further on, we crossed it and returned to the station.

July 12. Walked to Bredevangen, and then *stol-kjærred* to Klevstad. Between here and the Dovrefjelds at several of the stations were posted up notices in Norwegian and English, asking travellers to refrain from giving alms to the numerous beggars along the road, and to deposit instead their alms in boxes placed for the purpose, the funds in which would be administered by the clergy of the district, among the deserving poor.

We dined with two Englishmen from Liverpool, the elder of whom, from his being habited in a suit of rusty black and sundry other signs, we set down as a Dissenting minister, who had come to Norway with the laudable design of wearing out his old clothes. With a view to improving the occasion, he had before starting gone in for a comprehensive study of Norsk, and had so far succeeded in his aim, as to learn by heart a number of phrases, the one slight drawback being that as he pronounced them not one word in ten was understood by those whom he addressed.

The *carte* here was a most luxurious one of stewed meat, pancakes (*pandekager*), and strawberries and cream, at the appearance of the last of which the rev. gentleman waxed mightily jocose, and informed the old lady who officiated as "*pige*" that "she knew what was good," but we very much doubt whether she added to this knowledge

that of catching the point of his reverence's compliment.

July 21st. On our way from Oien, where we had slept the night before, to Listad we overtook a sprucely dressed peasant girl in her Sunday costume, on her way to the parish church several miles away. She wore no bonnet, having instead a gay silk kerchief tied coquettishly under her chin. As our roads lay in the same direction we walked on together in amicable converse, her Norwegian being rather more easy of comprehension than the ordinary Gulbransdal dialect, which used sadly to puzzle us. She was a communicative damsels, and told us that she had lived some time with an English family, who came annually to stay in the valley. They were here again this year, but through illness in her family she had been prevented from resuming her situation, and the place was now filled up to her great disappointment, for she evidently looked back to her service with the *Engelsk familie* as an event in her life.

Chancing to enquire their name we found to our surprise that they were acquaintances of ours, a Mr. and Mrs. Lund, whom we had sailed with on the Oder. The place they were staying at being but a few hundred yards out of our way, we determined to give them a call *en passant*, and bidding our friend adieu at the church door, we soon found ourselves before the house of the most

extensive *landhandler* (country general dealer) in the district. To add to his income he also took in boarders, among them our friends, who welcomed us in the warmest manner, and introduced us to the other visitors, and the lady of the house, the master being away in Christiania.

It was somewhat of a misnomer to call the Lunds "an English family," the gentleman being a Dane who had lived many years in England, and the lady hailing from north of the Tweed. They were greatly amused at the history of our meeting with their old domestic, and at the lucky chance which brought us on their traces. We dined *en famille*—simply but well—glasses of the native brandy being previously handed round to promote appetite.

In the afternoon we wanted to continue our tramp, but our entertainers would not hear of it, and plainly intimated that having caught us we were not to escape so easily, and as the rain was now pouring down heavily we made no very great resistance.

We were soon initiated into their programme of amusements for the next two or three days, among which was an ascent to a neighbouring *sæter* on the morrow, at the mention of which my companion grew so excited that I at once gave my consent to join the party.

We soon found that we had involved ourselves in something more serious than a mere mountain

climb, being nothing less than accompanying our host and hostess to a grand evening party at the Sorenscrivers, or principal magistrate of the Gulbrandsdal, who lived some two or three miles on the road we had come. In vain, we represented that our pedestrian costume would look rather out of place among a crowd of elegantly dressed people, and that having sent on our traps to the next station, we had not even a change of linen to make ourselves presentable. "Besides," we weakly urged "we are not invited, and shall be looked upon as intruders."

It was all to no purpose, our excuses were all pooh-poohed. Our dress would not matter a bit, as every one went just as it suited his or her fancy, and the fact of our being English would cover a multitude of deficiencies in toilette. As to not being invited, the notion was laughed to scorn. Norsk hospitality had not been so far contaminated by civilization as to object to a couple of guests, more or less. In short, we were fairly talked out of all our scruples, the more readily, we must acknowledge that in our secret hearts we were hailing the chance of assisting at a Norwegian festive gathering.

A messenger was forthwith dispatched to Listad station to order rooms for us, and to give instructions for our knapsacks to be sent back by the next return conveyance, and at five we drove off in

state in a sort of heavy barouche drawn by two horses, and coached by a brother of Mrs. Lund, a tall Scotchman, who, in spite of his solemn look as befitted "the Sabbath," proved himself a right jolly fellow before the evening was over.

On arriving at the house of Herr Kaltenborn, a long rambling pile with extensive outbuildings attached, we were received at the door by the Sorenscriver himself, a fine hearty old man, supported by three stalwart sons, with a crowd of male visitors in the back ground. The guests were rapidly arriving, and comprised nearly all the principal people in the district.

First, there were the son and daughter of the doctor, an important person in a country where they are so scarce as the interior of Norway. Then came a nephew of the Foged, but owing to indisposition we were deprived of the pleasure of that official's company, and with it that of his two nieces, whom we afterwards found were the identical young ladies whose pedestrian exploits had roused our admiration in the Romsdal. The Listad station-master was well represented, the "pastor's" daughter bearing away the palm as the belle of the assembly, and our number was made up with a visitor or two from the capital, and sundry youthful branches of the wealthy Gulbrandsdal farmers, who in their spruce attire would have done no discredit to a Paris salon, and made

us look doubtfully upon our Joseph's dress of "many colors," set off by boots of portentous thickness.

We were first ushered into the reception room, in which the ladies were assembled in force. Most of the party being old acquaintances, no introductions were necessary, save in our own case, and their frank, pleasant greeting made us feel at once at home. Tea was now handed round on trays, and as each one received his cup he advanced into the ante-room, where sat the portly lady of the house, surrounded by a bevy of daughters and friends doing the honors of the tea table, and dispensing the piles of cakes and gingerbread, with which the board fairly groaned.

We found the Norwegian girls very charming and unaffected, not pretty so far as features went, but with a depth of expression which was most gentle and womanly. None of them were *en grande tenue*, dressed, or rather undressed, to death, as we too often see at home. Light inexpensive muslins were the favorite toilettes, and if some of the fair creatures were a thought dowdy in their get up, their out of the way position was ample excuse. They all seemed delighted to have Englishmen to talk to, many of them were learning our language, some with considerable success, and we (lucky fellows) were in constant requisition to aid them in mastering the intricacies of our troublesome pronunciation. One of the best linguists was

the daughter of a "pastor" in the Sogne Fiord, and we soon inferred from sundry signs and symptoms that she was *forlovet* (engaged) to the second son of our host. She had spent the last winter in the Loffoden Isles, the great cod-fishing centre on the west coast, near the Maelström, and gave us an interesting account of her life there. In spite of the slight drawback that the sun from November until February is only visible for three or four hours daily, they seemed to have had a very jolly time of it, sledging and skating in the day time, and spending the long winter evenings in festivity and merry making.

By this time, tea being well over, a long drawing room, with French windows opening into the garden, was cleared by some of the gentlemen, the heavier part of the furniture taken out bodily, whilst the chairs were huddled up against the walls, and we soon saw that a dance was in contemplation. There was no piano, not even a fiddler, but quite a novel kind of dance music, in the shape of a rough looking peasant lad, with a large old-fashioned accordion, which he really played most effectively, and agreeably disappointed our preconceived notions of it as a musical instrument.

The entrance of the *spillemand* (musician) was the signal for action. Partners were chosen, and some twenty couples were soon footing it merrily in a lively Scottische called here the "Rhiinlander."

The dances most in favor besides, were galopes, valses, the "Tempete," quadrilles (somewhat differing from our own), and cotillons, the last of which were danced in the French fashion, with a variety of amusing accompaniments with cards, scarves, &c.

They were most energetic dancers, going in for it with a force and vigor which we hardly expected from the sluggish phlegmatic Norsk character. All seemed to dance for the sake of dancing, and save with the one or two engaged couples, there was none of the flirtation and spooneying that we are accustomed to see at home. There was but little conversation or promenading in the intervals, for after a dance each cavalier, after conducting his partner to a seat abruptly left her, and rushed off to recruit his energies by a visit to a refreshment buffet, where hot punch was being manufactured and consumed at a great rate.

Their admiration of the adage that "silence is golden" was amusingly exemplified in the way partners were chosen. The gentleman walked up to the lady whose hand he wished to secure, drew himself up before her as stiff as a soldier on parade, and then all once, without uttering a word, gave a sudden duck, bow, or bob, for it was a compound of all three, as if he had been suddenly galvanized.

The lady, as if the same shock had affected her, rose with a jerk (there were never any refusals), put

her arm through that of her partner, and whirled away into the giddy throng.

As we were not exactly in dancing trim, we preferred taking merely a passive part, and contented ourselves for sometime with watching the fun from the shelter of a doorway, "quite adjacent," as Pat would say, to the punch department. Our host, however, who in spite of his seventy summers was footing it with the best of them, soon dragged us out of our retirement. It was no use pointing appealingly to our heavy nailed boots as an excuse, for one of the sons at once volunteered to fit us out in a pair of his own, so mounting with him to his room, we were soon equipped in a pair of spring-sides, which had the one drawback of being about three sizes too large for us, and in which we were always in doubt as to whether our feet were in or out of them.

Whilst hesitating as to which of the damsels we should honor with our hand, and working painfully out in our minds, a Norsk translation of the formula, "May I have the pleasure," &c., we were relieved from all difficulty of choice by the approach of a gentleman with a lady on each arm, who, coming to a stand in front of us, smilingly asked which we admired the more, roses or lilies. On gently acknowledging our preference for the former flower, he presented us for a partner the one of his fair charges typified by the "rose," while

retaining the "lily" for his own. This lively little plan of effecting an introduction was constantly in progress during the evening, and we think it might be introduced with advantage at home, for the benefit of those "virgins of uncertain age," who, under the disparaging title of "wall-flowers," sit desolate and neglected in our ball rooms.

After two or three hour's dancing, supper was announced, and we all filed into another room, where a genuine Norwegian banquet, both as to the quantity and quality of the viands, was laid out. There was only room at the table for half our number, but the difficulty was got over in a manner which rather upset our preconceived notions of Norwegian politeness. The motto of *place aux dames* was altogether ignored, for the gentlemen having led their partners up to the festive board, and assisted them to whatever chanced to be their "particular vanity" in fish, flesh, or fowl, quietly sat themselves down at the table, whilst the ladies, plate in hand, retired into the back ground, and extemporized tables as they best might with the sofas and chairs of the adjoining room.

The supper was no mere butterfly repast of jellies, trifles, and light airy nothings, but a most substantial matter-of-fact affair, served up hot and smoking, and was heartily appreciated by the guests of both sexes, who seemed as though determined to incapacitate themselves from any after exertion.

To do them justice, however, it only seemed to have given them fresh vigor, for dancing was at once resumed and kept up until the small hours of the morning, with occasional pleasant little interludes in the shape of strawberries and multeboer with cream, which were handed around among the dancers.

But the favorite refreshment for the sterner sex, and somewhat a strange one for a hot July night, was the hot brandy punch already alluded to. The materials for brewing it were on a table in the hall, which presented the additional advantage of admitting the cool night air through the open door. At the close of each dance there was a general rush of gentlemen towards the phalanx of glasses ; pipes were lit, and there they remained till the sound of the music called them once more to action. They must have strong heads these Norwegians, for the amount of punch they disposed of during the evening was something portentous. Everybody was continually drinking to his neighbour, with a clinking of glasses in the French and German fashion. As strangers and Englishmen, we were in great request for this purpose, but as we were by no means ambitious to sustain the reputation that Iago gave our countrymen, of being "most potent in potting," we took the prudent course of imbibing but a sip at each toast, instead of satisfying the hospitable desire of our entertainers by draining our glasses in their honor.

At last, a little before three, the party began to break up. The horses were harnessed, carriages brought round, and after an immensity of hand-shaking from the whole family circle of the Kaltenborns, who came out to see us off we brought our Sunday evening's entertainment to a close.

We do not doubt that we shall shock the sensibilities of the severe moralists among our readers by the confession we have just made of what they will consider our "Sabbath breaking!" Be it so. This is not the place to enter upon the vexed and oft debated question of the proper way to keep Sunday. We will merely remark that the Norwegians are to the full as proud of their form of Protestantism as we are of ours, and that as a people their standard of morals and religion is quite as high as our own. Whenever in the course of our peregrinations in Norway we ventured to touch upon this difference between the two countries, and described the dreary monotony of an English (to say nothing of a Scotch) Sunday, the reply invariably was "that they had no idea the English were so stupid."

Nine out of every ten of our countrymen believe as firmly as they do in their bibles that Sunday is invariably desecrated by Catholic, and honoured only by Protestant nations. There never was a greater delusion. Those who have travelled tell a far different tale ; and as a matter of fact, if there is

a pin to choose in this respect between Paris, or Berlin, and Vienna, or Hamburg, it is certainly not in favour of the Protestant cities.

For ourselves, having an opinion of our own in the matter, we were not troubled with any scruples of conscience, and were able to subscribe most thoroughly to Andrew's opinion, confided to us as we were bowling homewards, that there were "mony waurse ways o' spending Sunday in Scotland than that."

July 22. It had been arranged over night that we were to start early for the sœter belonging to Listad station ; but owing to our dissipation it was past ten before the cavalcade mustered in the courtyard at Listad. Five of us were on horseback, Mr. and Mrs. Lund and ourselves, Andrew leading the way, on a raw-boned charger, while the rear was brought up by Miss Jarman, the daughter of the station-master, in a stolkjœrre, laden with a supply of creature comforts for our consumption.

The road wound at first through the upper slopes of the valley, zig-zagging upwards at awfully steep gradients, and with gates at every few yards, dividing the various tiny freeholds, among which the groups of farm buildings were thickly scattered. As we mounted higher and got on to the bare plateau the road changed into a mere sandy track, which had only been lately laid down at great trouble and expense, over the swampy face of the mountain,

and was looked upon as a good *soeter* road. Now and then there were ugly gaps in it, where it had been swallowed up by the ravenous bog ; and as the poor horses floundered up to their bellies in a sea of black mud, we could easily imagine what unpleasant travelling it must have been before the present road was made.

The night had been one of incessant rain, but the clouds had risen with the sun, and under its influence were now dispersing, like a routed army, among the dark array of peaks that encompassed us. Beneath us extended a magnificent view of the Gulbrandsdal, with the road stretching like a huge white serpent along its green slopes, looking in the bright transparent air as though within a stone's throw.

We halted at frequent intervals to rest the horses in their long climb. The plateau once gained, however, we improved the pace, and when the road was firm enough to permit, cantered along briskly over the dreary fjeld, which required all the influences of a bright sun and the bluest of skies to counteract its melancholy influence.

Once or twice the road plunged into the depths of a romantic gorge, where the spurs of two mountains commingled, and down which a torrent rushed through a forest of pines to gain the valley. To our regret the improved part of the road soon ceased, and for the rest of our ride

we had an opportunity of seeing what a sæter road was like in its integrity. A road is far too dignified a title, being in truth the most villainous of horse tracks, oftener than not the bed of a torrent, among the loose stones of which our horses picked their way like cats, stumbling, slipping, and sliding along in a marvellous fashion, but never once coming to grief and pitching us over their heads, as we every moment expected they would do. They were most intelligent animals, and we soon found the best policy was not to dictate to them which way they should go, but leave them to follow their own instincts, and it was most interesting to notice how, on coming to an especially "ugly bit," they would test each step carefully with their forefeet, before trusting their whole weight upon it.

We passed a number of mountain farms belonging to the Venebygdal, a lateral valley running into the Gulbrandsdal, and which, narrow throughout, dwindled at its upper end to a mere cleft in the mountains, their gloomy pine fringed sides setting out in bold relief the snow-white waters of the invariable river.

The inmates of the huts who came out to see us pass seemed miserably poor, their principal support consisting in herds of goats, that were browsing on the lichens and rough herbage around. Turning now abruptly to the left to breast the mountain

slope, and congratulating ourselves on reaching a more even and pleasant road, we found it was but “out of the frying pan into the fire,” for the way lay over a succession of swamps, through which our horses struggled painfully, now and again sinking so deeply as to make us feel slightly nervous for the result. We were not re-assured by young Jarman, whom we met at yesterday’s dance, and had now overtaken us on foot, relating some of his experiences, and how, on one occasion, he and his horse were for more than half-an-hour in one of these swamps, having the narrowest escape in the world of being swallowed up. We were heartily glad to catch sight of the sceter, standing in the middle of its little plot of bright green pasturage, with the flocks and herds grazing picturesquely around. The Norwegian sheep and cows—from their pastures lying so much among the broken ground of the mountain slopes—are almost as clever at climbing as the goats; and we used often to admire the agility and skill with which they would scale the steepest ascents.

We were welcomed at the door of the sceter by the two strapping *piges* in charge of it, and who were doubtless not at all sorry to have the monotony of their life relieved by a visit from the lower world. The sceters, which are almost the exact counterparts of the Swiss Chalets, are of course

only tenanted during the summer months, from about the beginniug of June until the end of September.

The journey to it is looked upon as the great event of the year among the valley folk, and is a constant theme both for Norwegian poets and painters. Storm, the bard of the Gulbransdal, has written in the country dialect two charming idylls descriptive of the progress to and from the sœter, and one of Tidemand's most striking canvasses depicts a family flitting to the mountain farm, the "house father" driving before him a horse heavily laden with baggage, while the mother follows, bearing a chubby child on her back, an elder brother waking the echoes with an Alpine horn, to keep together the scattered goats that accompany the procession.

The first business on hand was dinner, which our four hours ride and the bracing air of the hills had made us quite ready for, and it was with some anxiety that we looked out for the approach of the stolkjøerre on which our hopes of the comissariat department mainly depended. It was a matter of wonder to us how anything on wheels could ever have made its way over the vile roads we had come, but it made its appearance at length, and we were soon sitting before a rough but bountiful meal. Vale and mountain each contributed their quota to the banquet, though the novelties were of

course furnished by the latter. The grand *pièce de resistance* was a huge wooden bowl of thick cream (*flöte*) from the sceter dairy, round which we all sat, spoon in hand, waiting the signal of attack. As we were in blissful ignorance of the proper mode of procedure we kept our eyes on the Lunds, who were old hands at sceter life, in order to follow their lead, and not commit ourselves by any *gaucheries*. Beside us stood two smaller bowls, filled, the one with moist sugar, the other with grated bread crumbs.

The initiated commenced operations by first sprinkling a small quantity of each, over as much of the cream as their appetite or fancy dictated, then seizing a spoon, they plunged it into the floating mass, detached a square inch or so, and quickly, ere it could slide away, conveyed the luscious morsel to their mouth. It seemed so easy that we at once marked out our own particular extent of territory, and plunged fearlessly in *medias res*. Like many other apparently simple things, however, we soon discovered that some amount of practice was requisite to go through the task either gracefully or effectually.

The first plunge of our spoons at once informed us that what looked like a solid mass of cream, was but a floating coat some half an inch in thickness, and the difficulty was to get this into the spoon without an accompaniment of the underlying milk,

which a week's standing had converted into a thin sour fluid, anything but palatable to British tastes though not so to Norwegians, who seem to have an idea that milk, like wine, improves by keeping. The cream itself had a slight acidity about it, but for this the sugar proved an ample corrective, and after the first few mouthfuls had been captured and disposed of, we were quite ready to confess that if it did not surpass, it was at all events a very good substitute for the far-famed cream of Devonshire. Like, however, the pork-pie of Pickwickian renown, that the young lady quoted by Mr. Weller pronounced "rather too rich," we found that the Norwegian delicacy was very satisfying, and in spite of the invitation of our entertainers to "go in and win," we were soon compelled to cry "hold! enough!"

We were all so utterly incapacitated by our debauch (strictly a teetotal one) that movement for a time was out of the question, and a proposal for a general siesta was put, and carried unanimously. To enjoy it in the fresh air, instead of the close room, the windows of which obstinately refused to open, we adjourned to the roof of the cow-house, which one of the party had pitched upon as a snug place for a snooze, being covered with a most luxuriant crop of long grass and soft lichens, among which we sank down as in a feather bed. These hanging gardens are very common in Norway.

The roofs are constructed with planks, the crevices being filled with birch bark, and the whole surface is then covered with turf, among which the seeds of many a wild flower, the pansy and the lily of the valley, take root and flourish. They are always favorite browsing grounds for the goats, which display no little ingenuity in their attempts to gain possession of them.

Here we lay till the sun had lost a little of its power, and here, after a spirited debate, we determined to defer our plan of descending to Listad till the morrow, and take our chance of what accommodation the sœter could afford in the way of sleeping room. Listad was far superior in size to the usual run of sœters, which usually consist of only one large room, that serves as dairy and general living apartment, and as the lower classes of Norwegians by no means hold to the belief that "cleanliness is next to Godliness," and have in addition a rooted antipathy to fresh air and cold water, the condition of these places may be easily imagined. Fortunately, we had no complaint to make on this score of our present quarters, overcrowding being the most serious discomfort we were likely to experience.

Apropos of this, Mr. Lund recounted to us how a week or two ago some twenty or thirty of them made an excursion to a neighbouring sœter, intending to return the same night; soon after their

arrival, the weather experienced one of those sudden changes peculiar to high mountain ranges, an incessant rain-pour set and continued without intermission for forty-eight hours, completely precluding escape, at least for the lady portion of their number. Being all young people, however, and gifted with a pretty good supply of animal spirits, they only looked upon it as rather a good joke than otherwise. Provisions and other supplies were ordered up from the valley, and last, but not least, the *spillemand* with his accordion, the same who had discoursed sweet music to us the evening before. As there were but a couple of rooms in the soeter, all possibility of sleep was out of the question, and so on the musician's arrival they set to and danced until the weather once more cleared up, with just sufficient breaks to give the poor, accordionist time to recruit his over taxed energies.

When it had been settled where we were all to be stowed away for the night, we sallied out on an excursion to a point which commanded a magnificent *coup d'œil* down into the Venebygdal, casting on our way many wistful glances towards the peaks, rosy with the glories of the setting sun, that rose around the soeter, and which seemed as though half an hour would have brought us to their summits.

But distances are very illusory in the bright mountain air, and young Jarman, who knew every foot of the ground, told us it would take several

hours to ascend and return. The first part of our way lay over the swampy surface of the fjeld, which craved wary walking to avoid sinking into the treacherous ground, and the inky pools that at every step intervened. Now and again a lemming, disturbed in a foraging expedition, would scuttle off into the juniper bushes, and when hard pressed take to the water as kindly as any duck.

After pushing our way through a succession of scrub and dwarf pines, we made a detour in order to see a waterfall, situated in a gorge, through which the waters of a mountain stream found their way into the valley. It was a break neck scramble down to the fall, over huge boulders that seemed as though they had been cast down by Titans in their playful sport.

The fall was but a small one, its principal charm arising from the romantic, secluded glen in which it was embosomed. A dense tapestry of ferns and wild flowers covered the steep sides of the rocks, that on all sides seemed to cut off retreat from the outer world. The foaming mass of snow-white waters looked in the dim twilight weird and ghost like, and one could imagine how from such a scene the superstitious Northern nations would draw materials for the naiads and water sprites in which their literature is so rich.

To avoid retracing our footsteps we forded the stream just below the fall. Although shallow, the

water had great force, and the spray was so heavy as to wet us through in a few moments. My young companion was the last to cross, and as he seemed disinclined to face it, young Jarman coolly hoisted him on his back, and brought him over dry shod.

Beyond here we met numerous herds of bright eyed goats, being driven in for the night to the neighbouring sœters, a precaution nearly always taken on the mountains. In bear infested districts fires are burnt all night in addition, as if Master Bruin once gets a taste of meat, he becomes a most persistent visitor.

After a pleasant ramble, we reached the point we were making for—a bold, rocky promontory, jutting like a headland into the gulf 1500 feet below, and commanding a splendid view of the dark gloomy gorge of the Venebygdal, one mass of green waving pine tops. The river was a mere streak of silver in the pale twilight, its roar—owing to the distance—reaching our ears but in a subdued murmur.

On our return to the sœter we had a “milk supper” by firelight, and then went to inspect our respective *nat kvarter*s (night quarters), the resources of the establishment being barely equal to the task without relegating some of us to the shelter of the cowhouse or granary, whither the *piges* themselves had to retire in our favour.

The living room, with its one bed covered with skins, was given up to the two ladies; a bedstead that stood close to the entrance door fell to the share of my companion and myself, while the other three were shown a hole under the roof leading to a species of loft, and which had been previously littered down with sundry heaps of straw. One by one they mounted the rickety ladder, and disappeared into the darkness. We lost no time in following their example, and squeezing ourselves into our own narrow box, which was an awfully tight fit for two, and precluded all possibility of free movement.

We were not destined to enjoy at once the sweets of repose, for long after we had retired an incessant clatter of tongues proceeded from a group of the *sceter* people and our own servant, gathered round the expiring embers on the hearth. As it was only natural that the *piges*, exiled as they were from the world below, should be anxious to post themselves up in the gossip and latest news of the valley, we lay quiet and made no sign, until at length Mr. Lund's patience getting exhausted, his night-capped head was thrust forth from his eyrie, and with a few words of energetic Norsk he drove them from their position out into the night. Our slumbers were very fitful, though our fears as to hostile attack on the part of certain nameless pests were happily not verified, but we were not

sorry when about four a.m., the *piges* came in and began the work of the day, by converting into butter and cheese the "lacteal produce," to use a Johnsonian phrase, brought in the preceding evening.

The fresh morning air was a delightful change after the close stifling scoter. The sunlight already tinged the mountain ranges with a chastened rosy hue, a few cloudlets flecking a sky which was almost Italian in its blueness. The bleating of the sheep and goats, begging to be set free to their pastures, were the only sounds that broke the silence, and the whole scene had that sweet indefinable charm we at times meet with in our wanderings through this glorious world, that serves in lieu of a meditation, melting the heart and moistening the eye with its beauty.

For our ablutions we preferred a mountain stream a stone's throw away, to the meagre aids the scoter was likely to afford us. The Norwegians, it must be confessed, do not take kindly to cold water, probably from its being so abundant with them, and the wash-hand jugs and basins at the stations always looked as though intended rather for the inhabitants of a doll's house, than for full grown Christians. The towels were never larger than good sized pocket handkerchiefs, and the native soap was such a curiosity, both in color and smell, as would secure for it a prominent place in an English museum.

On returning to the soeter in response to a summons to breakfast, we found ourselves surrounded by the now liberated sheep and goats, who hustled and pushed us about in the most amusing and unceremonious manner. We were at first almost carried off our legs by the rush, as each one strove to make its way to the front, and bring itself under our notice. A couple of solemn old ewes, whose faces had something almost human in their sagacity of expression, stood on their hind legs, barring our progress, with a foot on each of our shoulders, while behind us, some of the more depraved goats were actually rummaging our pockets, in the vain hope of discovering salt, which was the sole cause of the unusual commotion amongst them.

Just as they had given us up as a bad job, a *pige* made her appearance with a supply of the coveted dainty, and to her, in the twinkling of an eye, their "sheepish" attentions were transferred.

They seemed to be quite aware they had now got the real Simon Pure, and dashed at her in the wildest state of excitement, leaping high into the air at her out-stretched hand, and scrambling over each others backs in one undistinguishable heap. It was no easy task for her to make an impartial distribution, and, as in human affairs, a few of the more impudent and persistent got the "lion's share."

We rode back to Listad in the early morning, arriving at the station about noon. A party from the Sorenscrivers came in while we were dining, with whom we discussed a bottle of port, made our final adieu to all our friends, and resumed the journey that had received so pleasant an interruption.

At Bakkejordet in the evening we met Lensmand Coucheron, who was engaged in his official capacity, liquidating the estate of an unfortunate land-handler who had just suspended payment—an event which seemed sadly out of place in such an Arcadian region.

July 24. We were roused in the morning by the appearance at our bedside of a *pige* with a cup of coffee, which she gravely handed us as soon as we recovered consciousness. Among the ancient Scandinavians it was the custom to offer all guests an "awakening cup" of *mjöd* (mead) or spiced ale, which, if the visitor was a person of distinction, was borne in by the "house-mother" or one of her daughters. This custom has, however, fallen into general abeyance on the frequented routes, but in the western and more primitive districts it still lingers, and we shall not easily forget our first introduction to it, and the startling effect produced on our nerves by a strapping Hallingdal lass suddenly appearing before us in her outlandish costume.

Before breakfast we indulged in a plunge in the lake, to the astonishment of a group of natives haymaking in the adjoining field, and who looked aghast at such an unheard of proceeding. We stopped and had a chat with one of them after our dip, in the course of which he argued most seriously that bathing in cold water was most unhealthy, an opinion not all we could say to the contrary in the least degree weakened.

Before leaving, we took a short cut over the hills, to see our lady friends at the Lensmand's. They were very pleased to see us again, and over a cup of chocolate we related our mutual experiences since our last meeting. When we rose to go they insisted on escorting us with two attendant cavaliers as far as Bakkejordet, where we packed up our traps and discharged our score.

Madame Szacinski gave us a letter to her husband, one of the first photographers of Christiania, and after much hand-shaking and many hopes that we might some day meet again—we parted and went our respective ways.

We had a hot walk to Holmen, posting from there to Aronsveen, the scene of our upset ; midway, the sky suddenly darkened behind us, masses of black rain cloud spread like a pall over the heavens, and it was plain we were in for one of those Northern storms that are almost tropical in their violence. Our only chance of escaping a wet jacket lay in

our horses speed, so putting the reins into our skydsguts hands, we pointed to the rapidly advancing storm, and bade him "*kjøre hurtig som mulig*" (drive as fast as possible), and as the road was down hill we were soon careering along at a pace that made every board in our frail chariot threaten to dissolve partnership, and considerably raised our estimate of the capabilities of Norwegian steeds. It was a close shave—we had barely time to ensconce ourselves under the porch of the station when the rain came down in torrents, and flashes of the bluest lightning we ever saw lit up incessantly every part of the horizon. It lasted so long that we began to despair of getting to Lillehammer that night, which, as the Miösen steamer sailed early in the morning, would have entailed the loss of the weekly steamer to Hull on the Friday. At each moment fresh batches of travellers were arriving, looking like drowned rats, and as there was a dearth of horses, and every one wanted to have the first chance of those that came in, we were compelled to "stand upon the order of our going," and put in a claim for priority, which was somewhat grudgingly allowed.

It was close upon midnight before we drove up to our old quarters at Ormsrud's Hotel, Lillehammer. It was our last ride. We were once again within the pale of civilization, and a feeling of regret stole over us that the curtain was about to fall on our

ramble, and that our pleasant slipshod existence was so soon to be exchanged for the stern realities of life. This feeling has never struck us so powerfully as in Norway. Elsewhere, in other lands, there is often-times a positive pleasure at the thought of returning home—but Norway seems to have a hold on the love and sympathies of Englishmen, which the sunny south, with all its radiant beauty, cannot rival. For those who have once seen Norway, her savage beauty and the simple life of her peasant sons have an irresistible attraction, and we have often met men whom nothing can allure elsewhere, but who, as year after year comes round, take flight for her shores with a persistency which almost amounts to a migratory instinct.

The rest of our journey may be dismissed in a few words. The morrow saw us once more steaming down the Miösen to Christiania, whence we sailed the next day for England in the "Hero," one of Messrs. Wilson & Son's best ships, and fifty five hours later we had exchanged the silvery waters of the mountain encircled fiords for the mud banks, and turbid waters of the Humber.

Our holiday was over, and the day dreams of the past month—one which we had lived as it were out of the world—faded away as we stepped on to the quay at Hull in the murky morning.

But the pleasures of memory are still our own,

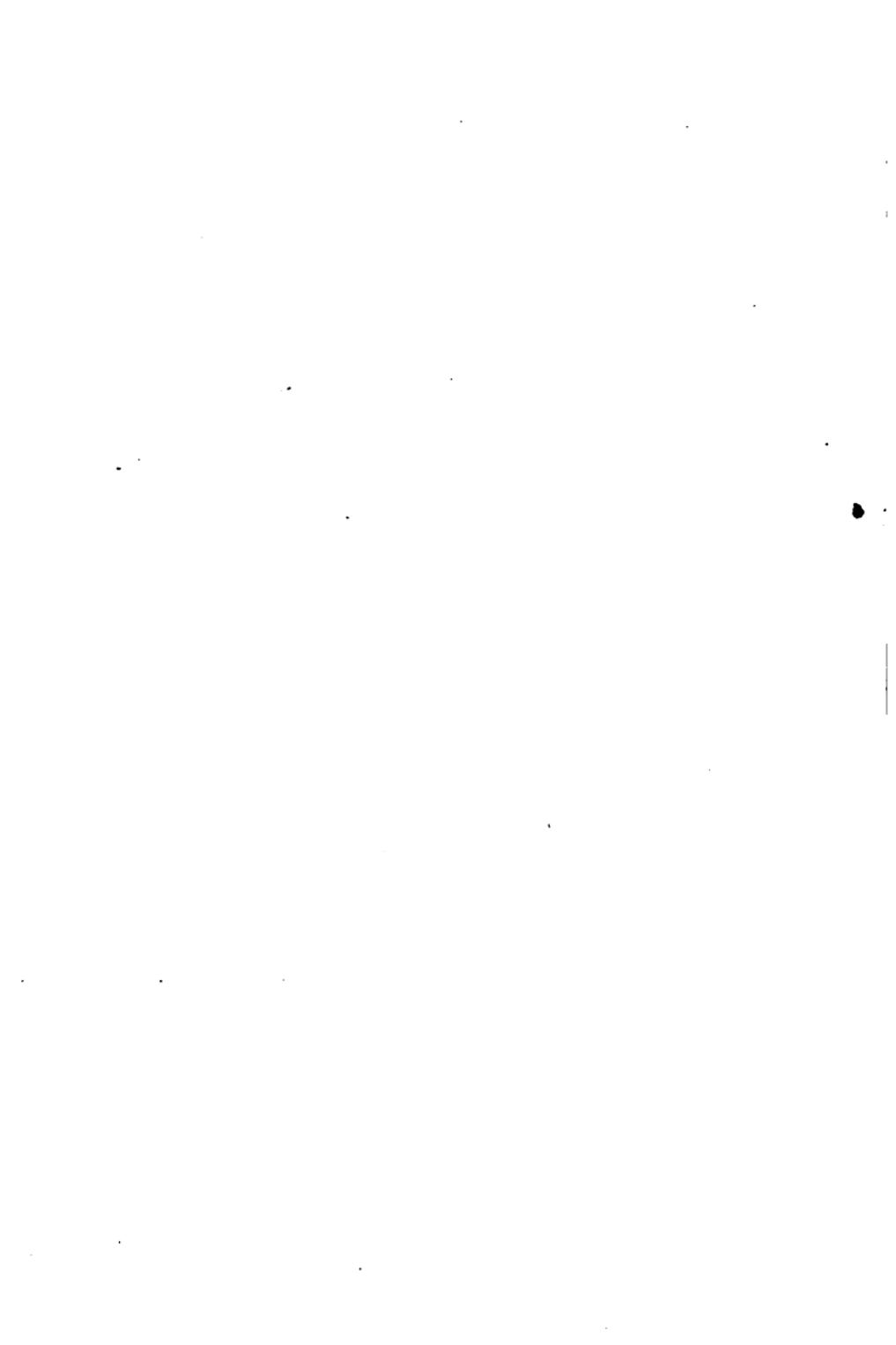
and with the bard who so well has sung them,
we may say in conclusion :—

—Once again

In my own chimney nook as night steals on,
With half shut eyes reclining, oft, methinks,
While the wind blusters, and the pelting rain
Clatters without ; shall I recal to mind
The scenes, occurrences I met with here,
And wander in Elysium.

Rogers' Italy.

END.



APPENDIX.



NOTE L.

E. Storm, the bard of the Gulbrandsdal, was born at Vaage in 1742, and died at Copenhagen in 1794. Besides his Sinklarsvisen he has left many poems in the dialect of his native valley which have passed into "household words" among his countrymen.

SINKLARSVISEN.

Herr Sinklar drog over salten hav,
 Til Norrig hans kurs monne stande ;
 Blandt Gudbrands klipper han fandt ain grav,
 Der vanked saa blodig en pande.

Herr Sinklar drog over bølgen blaa
 For svenske penge at stride ;
 Hjelpe dig Gud ! du visselig maa
 I groaset for Normanden bide.

Maanen skinner om natten bleg
 De vover saa sagnetig trille ;
 En havfro op af vandet steg,
 Hun spaede Herr Sinklar ilde.

" Vend om, vend om, du Skotske mand,
 " Det gjelder dit liv saa fage ;
 " Kommer du til Norrig, jeg siger formand
 " Ret aldrig du kommer tilbage."

II.

“ Led er din sang, du giftige trold,
“ Altidens du spaar om ulykker;
“ Fanger jeg dig engang i vold
“ Jeg lader dig hugge i stykker.”

Han seiled i dage, han seiled i tre,
Med alt sin hyrede følge;
Den fjerde morgen han Norrig mon se
Jeg vil det ikke fordölge.

Ved Romsdals kyster han styred til land
Erklærede sig for en Fiende,
Ham fulgte fjorten hundrede mand
Some alle havde ondt i sinde.

De skjendte og brændte hvor de drog frem,
Al folkeret monne de krænke;
Oldingens afmagt rörte ei dem
De spotted den grædende enke.

Barnet blev dræbt i moderens skjöd
Saa mildelig det end smiled;
Men rygtet om denne jammer og nød
Til kjernen af landet iled.

Baunen lyste og budstikken lüb
Fra grande til nærmeste grande;
Dalens sönner i skjul ei kröb
Det maatte Herr Sinklar finde.

Soldaten er ude paa kongens tog,
Vi maa selv landet forsvare;
Forbandet være det nidings drog,
Som nu sit blod vilde spare.

De bönder fra Vaage, Leje og Lom,
Med skarpen öxen paa nakke;
I. Bredebygd tilsammen kom,
Med Skotten vilde de snakke.

Tæt under Lide der løber en sti,
 Som man monne Kringen kalde,
 Laagen skynder sig der forbi,
 I den skal fienderne falde.

Riflen hænger ei mer paa veg
 Hist sigter graahærdede skytte,
 Nökken opløftet sit vaadø skjeg
 Og venter med loengsel sit bytte.

Det første skud Herr Sinklar gjaldt,
 Han brøled og opgav sin aande ;
 Hver Skotte raabte, da obersten faldt,
 "Gud fri os af denne vaande."

"Frem, bønder ! frem, i Norske moend !
 "Slaa ned, slaa ned for fode ! "
 Da ønsked sig Skotten hjem igien,
 Han var ei ret lystig tilmode.

Med døde kroppe blev Kringen strød,
 De ravne fik nok at øde ;
 Det ungdoms blod, som her udfød,
 De Skotske piger begræde.

Ei nogen levende sjøl kom hjem,
 Som kunde sin landsmand fortælle,
 Hvor farligt det er at besøge dem,
 Der bor blandt Norriges fjelde.

End kneiser en støtte paa samme sted,
 Som Norges uvenner mon true,
 Ve hver en Normand, som ei bliver hed
 Saa tidt hans øine den skue.

TRANSLATION.

Herr Sinclair sailed across the sea,
And steered his course to Norway's strand;
Mid Gudbrand's rocks his grave found he,
There were broken crowns in Sinclair's band.

Herr Sinclair sailed o'er the blue wave,
That he might fight for Swedish gold;
God help thee man! thyself now save,
Thou'l fall before the Norskman bold.

The moon amid the pale night shone,
The waves around so gently rolled,
A mermaid rose on Sinclair's sight,
And thus prophetic evil told:

“Turn back, turn back, thou Scottish man,
“Or it will surely cost thy life,
“For if thou com'st to Norway's strand,
“Thou never more shall join the strife.”

“Thy songs are lies, thou witch most foul,
“Thou ever sing'st the self-same tune,
“Could I but get thee in my power
“In pieces small I'd have thee hewn.”

He sailed a day, he sailed three,
With all his mercenary band,
The fourth, he Norway's shore did see—
On Romsdal's coast he leapt to land.

And with him fourteen hundred men,
On mischief all that band were bent,
They spared nor young or aged then,
But slew and burnt as on they went.

The child they killed at mother's breast,
 Nor cared how sweet so'er its smile ;
 Of widows' tears they made a jest,—
 Sorrow's loud cry arose the while.

Throughout the land the wail resounds,
 The beacon blazed,—the cross of fire
 Sped its swift course, and Sinclair soon
 Shall feel the 'vengeful dalesmen's ire.

The soldiers of the king are gone,
 We must ourselves the land defend,
 To shed his blood will ne'er grudge one,
 On such may heaven's wrath descend.

Peasants from Vaage, Lesje, and Lom,
 With axes sharp, on shoulder set,
 To parley with the Scots they come,
 And now at Bredebygd are met.

There rears a hill close under Lide,
 Which our vale-folk do Kringen call,
 The Logen's stream beneath doth glide,
 In that shall our fierce foemen fall.

On walls no more our rifles hang,
 The rocks are lined with marksmen gray,
 The water sprite lifts up its head,
 And waits impatiently its prey.

The first shot pierced Herr Sinclair's breast,
 He groaned, and forth his spirit gave,
 And as he fell, each Scot cried out:
 "Oh God, in this our peril save."

“ On peasants, on Norwegian men,
“ Let each foe find a Sinclair’s grave.”
The Scots now wished themselves home again,
And only strove their lives to save.

With corpses thick was Kringen strewed,
High festal did the ravens keep,—
The noble blood that this day flowed,
The Scottish maidens long did weep.

And not a soul of that array,
To Scotland e’er returned to tell
His countrymen of that dark day,
And how the sad event befel.

Mid Norway’s mountains still there stands
A column raised upon the spot;
Let Norway’s foes from other lands,
Behold it, and despise it not:
No Norskman sees it rise on high
But marks it with a flashing eye.

C. H.

NOTE II.

FROM HARALD HAARFAGER'S SAGA.

King Harald sent his men after a maiden named Gyda, a daughter of king Eirik of Hordaland, who was brought up by a rich farmer in Valders. The king wished to have her for his wife, for she was an exceedingly fair maiden, yet of proud disposition. When the messengers arrived, and informed the maiden of their errand, she answered that she would be throwing herself away, were she to take for her husband a king that had no greater kingdom than a few acres to rule over. "For it seems wonderful to me," said she, "that there is no king to be found who will subdue to himself Norway as sole monarch, as Gorm the Old, king of Denmark, or Eirik, king of Upsala."

The messengers thought that her answer was exceedingly proud, and asked her what she thought would come of such an answer. They said that Harald was so mighty a king that his offer was too good for her. But, although she answered them otherwise than they could have wished, they saw no pretence for carrying her away against her will, and so they prepared to depart.

When they were ready, the people followed them out, and then Gyda said to the messengers; "repeat these my words to king Harald—that only on this condition will I consent to become his wife that he will first for my sake subdue all Norway,

VIII.

so that he can rule over the kingdom as freely as Eirik over Sweden, or king Gorm over Denmark, for then alone, methinks, can he be called a king of a people."

The messengers now went back to king Harald, and took the maiden's message, saying that she was mightily bold and freespoken, and well deserved that the king should send a strong force after her and inflict some disgrace upon her. Then the king answered, that the maiden had neither so spoken or acted as to deserve punishment, and she should rather have thanks for her speech. She has reminded me, he said, of what seems now to me wonderful, but which I have not before thought of, and then he added—"I make a solemn promise, and swear it by the gods that created me and watch over all things, that I will never clip or comb my hair until I have subjected all Norway to my sway, with tax, and tribute, and dominion (skat og skyld og herredömme) or die in the attempt."

